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IRELAND.

THE Bill for enabling the Irish Government to imprison suspected traitors was not passed too soon; but an almost ostentatious reluctance to adopt exceptional measures of security well becomes a Constitutional Government. In that oppressed island which attracts so much compassion from foreign enemies of despotic rule, the law is for six months assimilated in some cases to the ordinary practice of France and the Continent. English tyranny is nevertheless still limited by superstitious scruples which must be unintelligible abroad. The temporary change in the law applies only to persons who are charged with treason or treason-felony; and the power of imprisonment is vested exclusively in the LORD-LIEUTENANT, or CHIEF SECRETARY, or six members of the Privy Council. The Act, unless it is renewed by Parliament, will cease to operate on the first of September, and in the meantime no writ of *habeas corpus* will be available for the production of the bodies of State prisoners. As there is no doubt that the Irish Government will exercise its unusual powers in perfect good faith, the risk that innocent persons will be incommoded is extremely small. Of five hundred emissaries who are organizing rebellion only a small portion have thus far been arrested, and the statement that many of them were seen to leave Dublin by the different railways seems to indicate a want of vigilance and energy. The Imperial Government is responsible for the duty of providing a sufficient garrison for Ireland. There were, a week ago, neither troops nor vessels of war at Galway, which, if Irish patriots demanding mail contracts may be trusted, is the most convenient port for communication with America; and a body of adventurers landing on the West coast might march into the middle of the island before they would encounter any military force. A local saying, that the next parish to Galway is New York, might suggest the expediency of watching the possible passage of the boundaries; and a portion of the English navy could scarcely be better employed than in guarding all accessible parts of the Irish coast. Sir HUGH ROSE will be the most competent judge of the military force necessary to render insurrection impossible. It would be better to denude Great Britain of troops than to grudge any reinforcements which may be required for Ireland. There is, indeed, no probability of serious fighting, but the seizure of half a dozen unprotected barracks might encourage the disaffected part of the population to venture upon open rebellion, and separate risings at distant points might render it necessary to scatter the troops. The ringleaders will not be sparing in their promises of assistance from America, and the lower class of Irishmen study but superficially either politics or geography. The precedents of 1798 and 1848 are not favourable to Fenian aspirations. The great French war, the mutiny in the English fleet, the nominal independence which had been attained a few years before by the Irish Parliament, might well alarm the Government which found itself assailed by a rebellion; and even on the later occasion, the state of the Continent, and the domestic agitation of the Chartists, seemed to render the position of the English Government insecure. At present, England is prosperous, tranquil, and united, and every respectable Irishman is really or professedly loyal. The American Irish who sustain the conspiracy which they originally devised represent, not actual grievances, but animosities of twenty years ago. Their dupes in Ireland have, notwithstanding the officious sympathy of Mr. BRIGHT, no reason for joining in the plot except the hope of getting rid of the landowners.

The popular and inaccurate phrase of suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act has been properly avoided in the title of the Bill. Parliament has passed "An Act to empower the LORD-LIEUTENANT to apprehend and detain for a limited time such persons as he shall suspect of conspiring against HER MAJESTY's

"person and Government." The Act of CHARLES II., which is suspended, together with the older provisions of the common law, only extended and secured a right which had been possessed for centuries by English subjects, although it had been from time to time infringed by arbitrary Governments, aided by corrupt or subservient judges. Experience, both negative and positive, has shown that exemption from irregular or indefinite imprisonment is the first condition of personal freedom. *Magna Charta* instituted or recognised the right of *habeas corpus* more than six hundred years before the authors of the famous principles of 1789 forgot to establish the first safeguard of human liberty; and even the exceptions which are occasionally made by the supreme authority of the Legislature approve and acknowledge the rule. The term of preliminary imprisonment is strictly defined, although it has been necessarily extended, and the powers of ordinary magistrates have not been enlarged. No French Government, whether Imperial, Constitutional, or Republican, has yet ventured to tolerate during profound internal peace the amount of liberty which exists in Ireland at a time when conspirators are threatening immediate insurrection. If more extreme measures should unfortunately become necessary, Parliament will not hesitate to take all necessary precautions. Mr. MILL was in one respect right when he interspersed his speech on the Irish Bill with apparently irrelevant expressions of his absorbing indignation at proceedings in Jamaica. His heart was in the West Indies, and not in Ireland, where there is assuredly no danger of an unauthorized institution of drum-head courts-martial. Insurrection would compel and justify the repression of force by force; but there is no reason to suppose that, in administering punishment, the Government will have occasion to exercise extraordinary powers. The honesty with which the juries discharged their duties under the Special Commission is the most satisfactory proof that the tide of Irish disaffection has receded. The foreign organization of the plot, though it causes practical embarrassment, is in itself less discouraging than indigenous treason.

Admirers of absolutism may find, from the proceedings of Parliament, that there is sometimes a convenience in constitutional government. Although HER MAJESTY was unfortunately at a distance from London, the Bill received the Royal assent within twelve hours from the commencement of Sir GEORGE GREY's speech in the House of Commons; and even the short delay which necessarily occurred produced no practical inconvenience, as the Irish Government made numerous arrests on Saturday in anticipation of the passage of the Act. If the Crown had the prerogative of suspending the law at its own discretion, there would always be a doubt whether the country at large approved of measures of exceptional vigour; but the sanction of Parliament covers the responsibility of Ministers, and it serves as a public notice that the whole community is resolved to preserve order and law. The presence of Irish members added weight to the condemnation of the Fenian conspiracy. The few dissentients probably agreed in substance with the majority, although they thought fit to vote against the Bill. The facility and rapidity with which the Act was passed imply no indifference to the liberties which are partially suspended. The necessity of applying to Parliament deters Governments from hasty or frivolous attempts to obtain extraordinary powers; but as the remedy of *habeas corpus* is only withdrawn in cases of emergency, a Minister can always calculate on the support of Parliament in times of serious danger. The formal communications of the LORD-LIEUTENANT were scarcely necessary to satisfy reasonable men that discharged American officers would be more fitly disposed of in prison than in travelling about the towns and villages of Ireland without ostensible business. A conspirator who, taking warning by the Fenian trials, carefully avoids the use of written or printed documents, is not easily convicted of treason, although it may be

evident that he is preparing a rebellion. The principal effect of the Act is to deprive prisoners of the benefit of the regular gaol-deliveries in the spring and the summer. If necessary, the Act will be continued in the latter part of the Session, and perhaps some of the criminals may have been previously brought to justice.

It is hardly worth while to inquire whether the Fenian leaders entertain all the designs which are proclaimed by their more zealous agents. Lord RUSSELL says that their accomplices have been promised the plunder of the principal towns in Ireland, with full enjoyment of the scandalous license which has been sometimes claimed by successful besiegers. On the other side, the apologists for the plot, or for its authors, declare that the Fenian chiefs are honourable and upright men, who merely happen to be engaged in an unlawful or irregular enterprise. The truth perhaps lies between the conflicting statements; or, rather, the different members of the conspiracy use the arguments which at any particular time and place seem most likely to procure converts. Mere ruffians are enlisted in the hope of obtaining unlimited plunder, but no contriver of rebellion who aspired to the character of a politician would propose indiscriminate pillage. Occasional assassinations might impress useful terror, and in some cases landlords might be doomed to destruction, but it is absurd to suppose that the Fenians meditate a general massacre of priests, or even of ordinary laymen. The theories of the proposed Republic are in the highest degree revolutionary, but they are not insanely suicidal. As far as the ringleaders have a definite purpose, they probably hope to reproduce in Ireland a copy of the social condition of the United States. The confiscation of the land which is essential to their scheme would be a sufficiently violent measure, and there is no reason to suppose that it would necessarily be accompanied by indiscriminate murder and robbery. It is not judicious to exaggerate the guilt of an enemy or a criminal, for the refutation of an unjust charge sometimes predisposes illogical reasoners to an unduly favourable judgment. It is often worth the while of bad men to calumniate their betters, but the reverse process is always a mistake.

The Irish Administration appears hitherto not to have been generally wanting in vigour or prudence, but the Ministers are bound to watch their subordinates with the most anxious vigilance. Any mistake or act of negligence may produce incalculable evil. The incredible imbecility which enabled STEPHENS to escape is probably the cause of the anxiety which now presses both on Ireland and on England. The most troublesome peculiarity of the plot consists in the large supplies of money which are forwarded from America. The purchase of arms is far less formidable than the offer of large bribes to soldiers and policemen; for mere rumours of corruption disturb the fidelity of those who have been yet untempted, and they shake the confidence of the authorities in their humbler instruments. A tempter who supports his promises of land by instalments of ready money can scarcely fail to procure accomplices. It is, however, probable that a large proportion of the Fenian recruits will desert their employers on the appearance of danger. Irishmen like the excitement of taking secret oaths in a dark room, and they have no objection to be paid for undergoing a pleasant ceremony; but more consideration is necessary before they put themselves in the way of being shot or being hanged. Mr. SMITH O'BRIEN had probably thousands of promises of support at the very moment when he stood alone in the cabbage garden. The statistics of the conspiracy, even if they were known, would probably be altogether uncertain and untrustworthy.

ANTICIPATIONS OF THE REFORM BILL.

IF any portion of the Kingdom is entitled to express freely its opinions on Reform to the head of a Liberal Ministry, the large Scotch towns have a claim that is not to be surpassed. Popular representation in Scotland was the pure creation of the first Reform Bill, for the worst abuses of the English system of elections were eclipsed by the abuses of the Scotch system. And since the large Scotch constituencies were called into existence they have been among the steadiest, the quietest, and the sincerest supporters of Whig Governments. The Scotch members very rarely disappoint their party on a division, and give no trouble to any one but the LORD-ADVOCATE. And yet there is enough intelligence, energy, and distinctive character in the Scotch members to save them from the reproach of mere passive obedience to their leaders. They contribute, too, to Parliament the example of a Liberalism which is ex-

treme but not bitter; and unless some of the mysterious ecclesiastical arrangements of their country are considered to be in danger, they can rely on their constituents leaving them to act with a very reasonable amount of freedom. Such a deputation, therefore, as waited on Lord RUSSELL last Monday was entitled to the respectful reception which it met with; and it was only due to his visitors that his Lordship should bring out for the occasion his best constitutional platitudes, and submit to them those instructive remarks about the antiquity of the British system which are indeed wholly without any practical bearing, but which show that the PREMIER is doing his best, and answer the same purpose which is fulfilled by laying the QUEEN's robes on the throne. Nor was the deputation without something to say that was very well worth hearing. It may not be satisfactory, but it is certainly important, to know that the leading Scotch constituencies are resolved, after much discussion, that the only change they wish for in the franchise is a simple reduction of the property qualification; that the reduction they desire is a reduction to a 6*l.* franchise in boroughs and a 10*l.* franchise in counties; and that they are clear there must be a redistribution of seats. Their spokesmen did indeed pay Lord RUSSELL the compliment of saying that if the Ministry was quite certain of being able to carry, first, the proposed reduction of the franchise, and then a redistribution of seats, they were content that the two measures should be successive, and not contemporaneous. But they were perfectly frank in the expression of their opinion that the Ministry, if it took this course, was not only pledged to do its best to succeed, but was pledged actually to succeed; and that to propose a mere reduction without a redistribution, and to fail, would be a disgrace to them and their party. Evidently Mr. GRAHAM, who more especially dwelt on this part of the general subject, has come to the conclusion at which almost every one who has studied the matter has arrived, that the Government could not carry a measure of bare reduction of the property qualification. There is nothing new in the proposal of a large reduction of this qualification, coupled with a more or less extensive redistribution of seats; but the nearer we get to the day when the Reform Bill is to be announced, the more clearly it appears that substantially this must be the character of the Government measure.

It is a common form now to say that fancy franchises are unfairly derided, and that it is silly and unjust to laugh at them. Merely to laugh at them is certainly both unjust and silly. They are the fruits of honest endeavours to devise plans by which the good of Reform may be gathered and the evil of Reform left ungathered. They are also very often ingenious in a high degree, and it would be a very bad day for England when all speculative views of politics were put down and discontinued because ordinary men did not see how they could be made practical. The objection to these fancy franchises is not that they are ridiculous, but that, as a matter of fact, they do not enlist the support of any considerable body of people. There is, for example, Mr. HARE's plan, which is by no means advocated by Mr. HARE alone. There are apparently independent minds which also have come to the conclusion that in the adoption of this elaborate contrivance lies the future safety of England. It is not necessary at this eleventh hour to discuss the scheme on its merits. Of course it is open to any person to think privately that it would be easier to learn to say the Church Catechism backwards than to learn how to vote under Mr. HARE's system. But this is a matter of private judgment. What is indisputable is, that the scheme has not commended itself to the minds of men. A Government cannot impose a complicated franchise on a whole nation because as many as four, or even five, persons are ready to swear that they understand it. And there are many other artificial methods of giving the working-classes a share of the franchise, without giving them an overwhelming share, which have found favour in the sight of many good and clever men. There is the scheme of giving the rich a plurality of votes, the scheme of giving a lower franchise in a few select places than elsewhere, and lastly, there is the scheme proposed by Mr. CLAY of giving the franchise not only to householders of a certain rental, but to every adult who, when examined by the Civil Service Commissions, can write, spell, cypher, and pay half-a-crown. This alone, of all these artificial methods, has been distinctly and seriously advocated by a member of Parliament in his place in the House, and it therefore deserves more consideration than the others. It has not received any support outside the House, and in the House the respect with which Mr. CLAY was listened to was paid rather to the speaker than to his proposal; and it is not to be much wondered

at that this should be so. Unless the new Reform Bill gives satisfaction to the working-classes there is no object in it, and no hope whatever in passing it. Now, is it at all likely that this educational franchise would be agreeable to poor men? Mr. CLAY calculates that even ambitious and intelligent working-men would ordinarily have to give up all their leisure for three months in order to pass the examination; and he justly says that to go through so severe a trial, purely with the object of being one in a constituency of perhaps ten or twenty thousand, would indicate in the working-man a high degree of perseverance, industry, self-denial, and courage. And if it were the object of a Reform Bill to reward good working-men, the test would be an excellent one. It is much more sensible to give a vote to a man who has stayed away from the public-house, and done sums every evening for three months, than to give a red plush waistcoat to an agricultural labourer who has succeeded in begetting thirteen children. But would the working-men like this mode of getting the franchise? We cannot conceive that they would. They would think that the rich had quite an unfair advantage over them as they have now, and they would retain their advantage in a way rather humiliating to those who were unable to share it. That he cannot afford to live in a better house is so familiar a part of a man's daily experience that at no particular moment is the sense of the fact driven into him with a stinging force. But it would be very mortifying for a good zealous workman to stay away from his beer, and learn to spell words of four syllables all night for months, and then be plucked just before an election, while he saw a good-for-nothing pleasure-seeking counter-jumper, whose father happened to be able to pay for his schooling, go through the examination in a canter, and vote, perhaps, against Mr. CLAY.

It is not surprising, therefore, that few members cared to speak on Mr. CLAY'S motion. Those members of the Liberal party who are at once friendly to the Ministry and friendly to Reform have been taunted with remaining silent when a proposal was made which ought to have commanded a hearty welcome from them. They would have shown an utter want of sense if they had said a word. The House was panting to get to its Cattle Plague Bill; and, although members whose heads were full of their cows curbed their impatience while they listened to speeches which it was imagined might embarrass Mr. GLADSTONE, they would have had no tolerance for speakers who had conscientiously argued the difficult question whether an educational franchise is possible or desirable. Nothing can be more useless than to take the edge off the public interest, and to weary the House by debating, on the motion of a private member, a subject which the Government is going to take in hand at once. Nor would it be possible to discuss Mr. CLAY'S motion to any purpose until the proposal of the Government is made known. If the franchise is to be fixed at a *6l.* rental, so many persons may very probably be qualified who can do no sums, and never stay a night away from their public, that the pains-taking self-denying man might think it scarcely worth his while to arrive by a very steep and thorny path at the eminence which all his neighbours climbed so easily. We shall not have to wait long now, for Mr. GLADSTONE says that the promised statistics are very nearly ready. The Government still believes, or affects to believe, in its statistics; and it is possible that more light may be obtained from them than is supposed, especially if a redistribution of seats forms a prominent feature of the scheme. There are probably very many boroughs where even a *6l.* franchise would only give the suffrage to a number of working-men so limited that they could be easily and immediately demoralized with bribes and beer. If this is so, it is as well that it should be forced on the notice of the House, although obviously, except as an argument for adopting or rejecting particular figures in a property qualification, and as bearing in a more indirect way on the question of redistribution of seats, statistics can do very little to help Parliament.

PRUSSIA.

IT seemed probable that the Session of the Prussian Diet might be abruptly terminated, and the expectation has been confirmed. The Minister refused to accept certain Resolutions of the House, and the Deputies consequently determined that they would not discuss any Government Bills. The rupture was complete, and the Government may, at its choice, regard as a triumph or as a failure another abor-

tive attempt to manage a Parliament in defiance of constitutional principles. The obnoxious Resolutions related to the vital question of Parliamentary privilege, and they were passed after a debate in which the principal speakers of the Liberal majority displayed remarkable ability. A representative assembly is absolutely powerless unless it enjoys perfect freedom of speech. The right to express opinions without responsibility to any external tribunal is implicitly conceded to every member by the Act or Charter which establishes a legislative body; and in the 84th section of the Prussian Constitution the privilege is expressly granted. "Members can never be called to account for their votes in the Chamber; and for their opinions there expressed (für ihre darin ausgesprochenen Meinungen) they can be called to account only within the Chamber on the ground of the Standing Orders." It might have been supposed that, as long as the Constitution is in force, it was impossible to take legal proceedings on account of any words spoken in debate; and for sixteen years the Courts have refused to receive any complaint of language used in Parliament. Successive Attorney-Generals have declined to sanction proceedings of the kind; and only three years ago, in a communication to the House of Deputies, the present Ministers declared, in the words of the 84th section, that "Members of the Chambers could be called to account, for the opinions which they expressed, only within the Chambers." As the breach between the Government and the House became wider, the criticisms and arguments of the Opposition became more and more intolerable to the Ministers. In the Session of 1865, the possibility of restraining freedom of speech was discussed in the Upper House, and one of the supporters of the Government inquired whether the legal immunity of members had been definitely recognised by the Courts. Count BISMARCK admitted that the doubt was well founded, and he promised to test the point by an official prosecution. Proceedings were commenced against Mr. TWESTEN and another Deputy, for language alleged to be calumnious or seditious; and the Supreme Court has lately decided, by a majority of one, that the prosecution is regular and legal. The House has consequently resolved that the Court has usurped a jurisdiction over a subject-matter which belongs exclusively to the cognizance of the House. In the course of the discussion it was asserted that the Court had been packed for the occasion by the MINISTER OF JUSTICE, and especially that two substitutes had been added to the tribunal, although their principals were present. The reputation of the Prussian judicature stands so high that it is difficult to suppose that a properly constituted Court would have delivered so monstrous a decision.

The eloquence and the dialectic power which distinguish the Parliamentary debates of Berlin are, for obvious reasons, imperfectly appreciated in England. There is no room for speeches in the correspondence of the London papers, and the scanty columns of the German papers admit only of meagre reports. The official shorthand versions of the speeches, even if they were generally accessible, are far too diffuse for a foreign reader. Englishmen would not find time to follow Mr. GLADSTONE, Mr. BRIGHT, or Mr. DISRAELI, if their speeches were verbally reported. When, however, occasional curiosity overcomes a natural repugnance to voluminous documents, the Prussian debates will reward the laborious student of contemporary politics. The speeches would be considered in the French Chamber deficient in rhetorical ornament, and they enter into first principles too systematically for the House of Commons; but they bear a striking resemblance to the great Parliamentary discussions of the seventeenth century, and the likeness is increased by the universal prevalence of legal methods of reasoning. There are many Judges and professors of law in the House, and some among them appear to speak with the same kind of authority which once belonged to COKE and SELDEN. Historical research is, indeed, scarcely needed in the interpretation of a law which was framed in modern German only sixteen years ago; yet the defence of the Constitution is interesting as well as conclusive, while the arguments of Count BISMARCK and his faithful supporters scarcely deserve serious examination. An Englishman might almost be biased in favour of the Liberal cause by the great importance which is attached by Prussian speakers to the constitutional precedents of his own country. They quote Mr. MAY'S History; they quote Mr. DISRAELI'S speeches; and they even refer to Colonel SIBTHORP as an illustration of the perfect freedom of speech which prevails in the House of Commons. Perhaps they were reminded of his name by the accident of possessing a Prussian SIBTHORP of their own, in the person of Count WARTENSLEBEN. Dr. GNEIST offered perhaps the most

exhaustive proof of the necessity of freedom of debate, and he clinched his argument by a forcible summary of English Parliamentary history. The celebrated case of Sir JOHN ELIOT furnished him with an exact parallel to the proceedings of the Prussian Ministers and of their docile tribunal; and by apt quotations from MAY's History, and from Lord CLARENCE himself, Dr. GNEIST showed how ruinous the acts of subservient judges had been to the Royalty which they served. Many other speakers clinched the demonstration that the privileges of the House had been violated; and Count BISMARCK could only defend the decision of the Court by absurdly violent protests against the licence of speech which he attributed to his adversaries. As to the question of law, he was compelled to argue that opinions only were protected by the Constitution, while members were still responsible for their words; but, as the privilege includes expressed opinions, it is impossible to suppose that the Minister believed in his own unmeaning quibble. For the present, by the acknowledgment of all parties, power rests with the Crown, and the House must confine itself to a protest until the time comes for confirming its rights. The Liberal leaders disclaim all purpose of revolution, and, as Dr. GNEIST said, the principle of insisting on legal rights "is a 'distinguishing national characteristic. The Latin nations 'are proud of calling themselves men of action. They are the 'nations which in similar cases are inclined to subvert the 'Government of the State, to put a new one in its place, 'which will be forced to govern less legally than the old one. 'We are more phlegmatic—phlegmatic enough to protest.' If the Germans are not men of action, they are emphatically men of thought, and it is not safe to allow the defeated party to demonstrate to the country that they are in the right. Count BISMARCK argues with a carelessness which implies little desire of influencing opinion.

It is by activity in an entirely different sphere that he may probably baffle his opponents. The rumour of increasing ill-will between Austria and Prussia seems to have solid foundation. The Prussian Minister would not have shrunk from war before the meeting at Gastein; and he may perhaps find encouragement to a rupture in the movements of Russian troops towards the Galician frontier. Although there seems to be no reasonable cause of quarrel, the war would be popular in Prussia, especially as it would remove all obstacles to the immediate annexation of Schleswig and Holstein. The ulterior results of such a war lie beyond the reach of calculation; and it is not impossible that an enemy might do the Emperor of AUSTRIA a real service by compelling him to concede the demands of Hungary. Continental wars, and particularly wars between Austria and Prussia, have often been the subject of idle rumours. The reasons for such a contest are frivolous in the extreme, and Austria has no money to spare, while the King of PRUSSIA wishes to avoid the necessity of demanding taxes or a loan. Count BISMARCK may, however, calculate on the dilemma in which the House of Deputies would be placed between a war for the aggrandizement of Prussia and the maintenance of constitutional rights. The people might possibly prefer ambition to liberty; and it is not certain that the Liberal party in the House would be unanimous in resisting the temptation. To foreigners it appears that the road to German unity can scarcely lie through a civil war. Prussia is, in Germany at least, intrinsically stronger than Austria, but a conquest of the Southern German provinces is beyond the range of possibility. Two formidable neighbours would watch an internal German struggle with complacent satisfaction, and it would matter little to either party whether France or Russia was a dangerous enemy or a patronizing mediator. The Germans are the most natural friends and allies of England, although neither Prussia nor Austria has been in the habit of showing deference to English opinions or English susceptibility. A war between the two great Powers would be regarded as an act of insanity by almost the only great European community which could have nothing to gain by the misfortunes of Germany.

M. PERSIGNY ON FRENCH LIBERTY.

THE debate in the French Senate on the Address has been enlivened by a constitutional oration from the Duke of PERSIGNY upon the merits and characteristics of an Imperial system. Since his retirement from active duty, M. PERSIGNY seems to have given himself up to the study of philosophy and literature, and has resolved, apparently, to fill the vacant post of a DE TOCQUEVILLE of Imperialism. Considering the rapidity with which his friends and he turned out the Second

Empire as a *fait accompli* in a few short weeks, his later years may be agreeably and pleasantly spent in developing its beauties in the shape of a great logical system. His creation seems, indeed, to sit rather heavily on his brain, and to afford him perpetual matter for intellectual exercise. He has trotted it up and down by the side of the English Constitution, with the assistance of several standard historical works; he has taken it for an airing into the history of Rome, Greece, and Carthage; he has put it through its paces by the light of the Principles of 1789 and the Rights of Man; and the more he looks at it the more thoroughly he likes it, and the more latent marvels he finds in it to admire. A year ago he presented his country with the result of his studies on the subject, and the last twelve months have not been spent by him in idleness. He has been at the French Empire again, worrying it, and shaking it, and observing it from every point of view, and wondering what else, in the name of goodness, it is like; and rushing every now and then into print with an air of triumph, to inform the world that he has discovered something new. At last M. PERSIGNY has arrived at a result that is as creditable to his candour as to his industry. He has positively found a flaw in the French Empire. He came upon the flaw quite unexpectedly, while he happened to be poking about that part of its organization which has to do with the French mayors. Like a faithful subject, he has carried the flaw to his Sovereign's feet, and deposited it, in the presence of the Senate, at the step of the Imperial throne.

Before entering upon the subject of his new discovery, M. PERSIGNY, in a brief summary, explained to his illustrious audience the great theory of the French Imperial machine. The Empire, as NAPOLEON III. has often told us, is designed to be an embodiment and union of the opposite principles of authority on the one hand, and freedom on the other. The manner in which the Second Empire proposes to reconcile the two is by keeping liberty at a respectful distance from the ground which authority occupies. On paper, this seems to be a most philosophical and wonderful system. But if we come to consider it, NAPOLEON III. and M. PERSIGNY reconcile liberty and authority in precisely the same way as the keeper in the Zoological Gardens reconciles himself and the white bear. He keeps the white bear on the inside of the iron bars, and himself on the outside, and the reconciliation is complete. M. PERSIGNY contrasts the working of the English with the working of the French Constitution, for the purpose of showing how far more dangerous the excesses of liberty are in France, and how much greater, therefore, is the necessity of limiting its movements. Ministries rise and fall in England, but the change does not throw into utter confusion and derangement the entire administrative system of the country. The reason, in his view, is that the county and municipal administration, the magistracy, the police and the local officials generally, are independent of the central executive; and to a certain extent he is correct. But he displays a pardonable ignorance of some English details. He labours under the erroneous impression that the Lord-Lieutenant of a county is a counterpart of the French prefect; that the local government of English counties and boroughs is entirely in the hands of unpaid officials; and that it is completely, whereas it is only partially, administered by members of the English aristocracy. It is, however, true—and M. PERSIGNY is entitled to the benefit of the admission—that experience may convince us how much of the stability of English institutions is due to our decentralization. When he turns to look at France, M. PERSIGNY sees instead a vast bureaucratic hierarchy, dependent for subsistence and promotion on the executive of the day. Every time the executive is shaken, the whole bureaucratic pyramid is convulsed from its apex to its base. His conclusion is that it would be fatal to place the existence of the Executive at the mercy either of a turbulent Chamber or of a licentious press; and the irresponsibility of Ministers, and a severe press law, follow from his premisses as logical and unimpeachable consequences. Liberty must be kept at a distance, and not permitted to shake the compact ladder of the administration. To our minds all this appears to be an admirable and unanswerable argument against the French system of a bureaucratic hierarchy, but to be no argument at all against the principle of liberty. If the French find their administrative ladder too liable to tremble every time a French journalist or a French deputy growls, they had better change their ladder; but there is no reason why they should muzzle every noisy French politician or every independent French writer. But M. PERSIGNY goes on to urge that the local system of England is incapable of flourishing on French soil. And why? His language on this point comes strangely from the mouth of an admirer of the maxims of 1789.

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"Nos classes bourgeois, quelque mérite qu'elles aient d'ailleurs, n'ont évidemment pas au même degré le prestige, les traditions, l'autorité morale dont jouissent chez nos voisins les classes aristocratiques." The French Senators who applauded and seemed to be satisfied with this final home thrust would scarcely have been willing to endorse the real and plain proposition if put to them in its naked form. All comes to this at last, that Imperialism is necessary because the French are incapable of local self-government; and the reason they are incapable is, that they have no aristocracy left. We venture to think that a more hopeless and a more desponding sentiment has never proceeded from the mouth of a French statesman since the downfall of the Bourbons.

Pessimism can scarcely be carried to greater lengths. And it is this pessimism that underlies the whole of M. PERSIGNY's logical treatise on Imperialism. The Empire is valuable and successful in his eyes, because, based once for all on universal suffrage, it tolerates no popular interference with the vast machinery of government. As soon as the nation has chosen its NAPOLEON, its sole lawful political function has been discharged. It may come as far as the ballot-box once in a generation, but it may come no further. The rest is committed to the hands of authority, and liberty, having been brought up to give its one good roar, is remanded for ever to its cage. M. PERSIGNY is pleased to put this remarkable theory in a pleasant and cheerful way. He calls it an arrangement by which power and liberty are confined to their appropriate spheres, and are each prevented from interrupting the free play of the other. We can certainly see how liberty is prevented from interfering with the free play of power; but in what the free play of liberty consists we are at a loss to perceive. It is nothing more or less than SPINOZA's explanation of free will parodied, and converted from a philosophical truth into a political paradox. That the highest liberty consists in obeying the NAPOLEONS is a maxim suited, no doubt, to M. PERSIGNY's temperament, but one which he can hardly expect to be considered gravely by any one except an inveterate and attached adherent of the family.

Surveying France by the light of this astonishing philosophy, M. PERSIGNY has at length, as we said, come upon a flaw. Every one has been labouring under the delusion that liberty in France was firmly and securely tethered to its peg. M. PERSIGNY regrets to state that this is an error. It has still got one little finger loose, with which to poke terror into the Administration; and M. PERSIGNY, whose literary nature leads him to hate inconsistency, hopes that Imperialism, whatever it may do, is not going to be illogical. The Government of the EMPEROR, by the new Constitution, is entrusted with the task of selecting the mayors for the different communes. It may choose the favoured individual either within or without the Municipal Council. But M. PERSIGNY has noticed with suspicion the alarming fact that mayors who have been designated before the time for the municipal elections frequently seek, after nomination, for re-election to the Council, at the hands of their fellow-citizens. Here, he thinks, is that everlasting Liberty again, creeping up close to the administrative ladder, in spite of all that has been done, and all the trouble HIS MAJESTY has taken. The only remedy is to knock the creature promptly on the head, and to hammer its peg closer to the ground. And, in a great and philosophical oration, he shows how fatally the flaw in question is at variance with the other paternal institutions of the Second Empire. Mayors are the agents, not of liberty, but authority, and they ought to have nothing in common with universal suffrage, or elections, or popular applause. It is, indeed, a very serious danger. The Minister whose business it was to comment on M. PERSIGNY's remarks in the Senate treated the suggestion with a heartless indifference, but perhaps, when the Cabinet of the Tuilleries has slept upon it, it will not think lightly of so grave a matter. Only one more twist of the administrative rope is wanted to repair the past omission, and a twist more or less is not of vital importance when the great object is to make Imperialism logical. When all has been arranged, and authority built into the firm foundations of a rock, Imperialism will be a consistent whole, and no one except the French EMPEROR will be responsible to the French nation for the fashion in which it is governed. The experiment of such a Constitution is a brave and perilous one. France will, theoretically, have no safety-valve but the safety-valve of revolution; and on the top of it NAPOLEON III. proposes to seat, not merely himself, but the fortunes of an unknown and untried dynasty.



APOLOGY FOR REBELLION.

IF Mr. BRIGHT had voted against the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* in Ireland, he would only have exposed his weakness in the House of Commons. The eight Irish members who formed the minority would have valued his vote less than his speech, and, unless Mr. MILL had welcomed an additional opportunity of justifying the popular prejudice against philosophers, not a single representative of Great Britain would have supported a factious opposition. It seemed a more hopeful experiment to deprive a necessary, though exceptional, measure of its moral weight by holding up the Imperial Government and Legislature to the indignation of the world. The Fenians and their American supporters will delight in quoting the admission of an eminent Parliamentary leader, that their hostility to England is just, that in sixty years only three considerable measures have been passed for the benefit of Ireland, and that in each instance the Government was forced into action by extraordinary pressure. If STEPHENS and O'MAHONY possessed Mr. BRIGHT's eloquence, they would adopt or anticipate almost every allegation in his speech. Even Fenians, however, have of late years forgotten some of the remoter grievances which are raked up for the purpose of excusing Irish disaffection; and since the time of O'CONNELL, demagogues have seldom thought it worth while to protest against the Union which was accomplished sixty-six years ago. Mr. BRIGHT will say "nothing"—or, in other words, everything which indignation can suggest—"of the circumstances under which the union of the two countries took place, save that they were disgraceful and corrupt to the last degree. I will say nothing of the manner in which the promises made to the Irish people were broken." The words might be understood as forming part of a vague invective against the English Parliament, if Mr. BRIGHT had not referred to the subject in another portion of his speech. As, unfortunately, it is not in the power of the Irish to remove their island "at least 2,000 miles to the west," Mr. BRIGHT expresses his belief "that if by conspiracy, by insurrection, or by that constitutional agitation to which alone I could give any favour or consent—I say, if by any of those means the people of Ireland could shake off, not so much the domination of the English Crown, as of the Imperial Parliament, they would do so to-morrow." It may be inferred that a constitutional agitation for the repeal of the Union would receive Mr. BRIGHT's favour and support. From the beginning of his speech to the end no other suggestion is offered to a Parliament which is taunted with want of statesmanship because it has not succeeded in conciliating Ireland. To retract the most difficult and most important step towards the establishment of a homogeneous empire, to dismember the monarchy for legislative, and probably for all other, purposes, is the only remedy for Irish evils which can be devised by the English successor of O'CONNELL. The plan is mentioned with approval at a time when it is actively prosecuted, not by constitutional agitation, but by conspiracy tending to armed insurrection. An apology for the professed objects of dangerous criminals is not rendered innocuous by an expression of disapproval of their means. Of course Mr. BRIGHT objects to armed insurrection, as he has almost always objected to the use of force, having only once during his political life accorded his hearty sympathies to a war. The Fenians might plausibly contend that, as constitutional agitation would probably be ineffectual, the vindication of Mr. BRIGHT's principles was not necessarily conditional on the acceptance of Mr. BRIGHT's limitations.

On proper occasions there may be rhetorical fitness, and even indirect utility, in contrasting the assumed omnipotence of Parliament with the unsatisfactory condition of a country which it governs. Exaggerations and fallacies may be pardonable methods of stimulating the energy and ingenuity of statesmen; but there is always a risk of encouraging the disaffection of subjects by censuring their rulers, and, when rebellion is imminent, the vague assailant of a Government can scarcely fail to countenance the treason of insurgents. If the repeal of the Union is excluded from consideration as a special fancy of Mr. BRIGHT's, the shortcomings which he attributes to every Minister, from Mr. PIT to Lord RUSSELL, may be reduced to inability or unwillingness to deal with two considerable questions. The Irish Establishment has not been destroyed, and the beneficial interest in the land has not been transferred from the landlords to the occupiers. The demand for Tenant-right is the only scheme which purports to affect the material condition of the people. It is possible that a great social and economic revolution might produce some beneficial effects, but Mr. BRIGHT is well aware that the change could not be effected

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except by a deadly blow to property. No such measure has been hitherto attempted in modern Europe. The confiscations of the French Revolution affected the property only of emigrants, or of persons condemned by the tribunals. ROBESPIERRE himself never ventured to expropriate the land-owners of France; and it is not surprising that Mr. GLADSTONE and Mr. DISRAELI are not tempted by Mr. BRIGHT's fulsome compliments to suggest such a project as the alternative to the not dissimilar schemes of the Fenian conspirators. Mr. MATTHEW ARNOLD's Continental busybodies are mistaken in asserting that STEIN dealt successfully in Prussia with a problem resembling the land-question of Ireland. The Prussian statesman merely abolished the servile tenures of hereditary occupiers of land. For the losses inflicted on superior lords compensation was awarded, and no change was made in the relation between landlords and rent-paying lessees. The Prussian provinces to which STEIN's measure applied were thinly peopled, while Ireland, notwithstanding the great emigration of the last twenty years, is still overcrowded in proportion to the extent and fertility of the soil. It is characteristic of Mr. BRIGHT that, since the repeal of the Corn-law, he has seldom referred to the doctrines of political economy. The dispassionate laws of demand and supply, of production and of population, have not lent themselves to the purpose of exciting bad feeling and animosity, except when they were violated by Mr. BRIGHT's landed enemies. It is demonstrable that, before the famine, Ireland was enormously over-peopled, and that the transfer of some millions of the inhabitants to an unoccupied region was a purely beneficial operation; and as the emigrants were driven forth by want to find plenty beyond the Atlantic, it is not unnatural that they should attribute their former sufferings to a Government which they had been habitually taught to dislike. That superfluity of land is better than superfluity of inhabitants is a proposition which ignorant Irishmen are not likely to understand as a sufficient explanation of their present and past condition. Mr. BRIGHT knows the simple truths which are too abstract for the capacity of his clients; but when he addresses the disaffected peasantry through the House of Commons, he carefully keeps his knowledge to himself. His long list of able and patriotic Ministers who have nevertheless failed to relieve Irish grievances would appear, to a fairer orator, to suggest the difficulty of the task, rather than the negligence of successive Governments. Mr. HORSMAN was accurate in his statement that Mr. BRIGHT has never proposed or advocated in Parliament any measure which would have tended to remove Irish disaffection. It is true, however, that, in a letter to the abortive National Association, Mr. BRIGHT recommended the subdivision of the land. The Fenians pursue the same object, though not by way of constitutional agitation.

The occasion of the attack on England was more censurable than its substance, and it would have been well if Mr. BRIGHT had incurred an appropriate rebuke. Mr. ROEBUCK destroyed the effect of his protest by his unseasonable denunciation of the Roman Catholic clergy. Mr. HORSMAN confuted Mr. BRIGHT's arguments with considerable force; but the duty of denouncing a wanton encouragement of a dangerous agitation devolved upon Mr. GLADSTONE, as the representative of the Government, and it was discharged imperfectly, or not at all. The leader of the House of Commons might have employed his powers more worthily than in the reciprocation of civilities with a speaker who had wilfully transgressed the plainest rules of propriety and of patriotism. Mr. GLADSTONE's "honourable friend the member for Westminster," who had taken the opportunity of talking about Jamaica, had apparently only spoken to illustrate still more fully the number of crotchetts which may be packed into a Parliamentary fortnight. His "honourable friend the member for Birmingham" had said enough to provoke an expression of opinion which would have gratified the House and reassured the country. It was superfluous to dilate on the eloquence of a speech which required, not to be praised, but to be answered. Mr. GLADSTONE has created an impression that he either fears Mr. BRIGHT or inclines to his opinions. The suspicion is perhaps only founded on an elaborate use of courteous phrases; but if it is confirmed, it will weaken the Government. Mr. GLADSTONE's arguments were so sound that it is a cause for regret that they were not enforced with an indignation which has sometimes been excited by far slighter causes. It is true that the function of England is to mitigate the internal animosities of Ireland, and that, if the island were detached from the Empire, it would probably become a prey to internecine domestic hostilities. It was also well to remind the House that it represents Ireland as well as Great Britain,

and that all but an insignificant fraction of the Irish members supported the measure of the Government. There was no propriety in a half-confession of the want of statesmanship which had been imputed to the Ministers and to their predecessors by Mr. BRIGHT. The performance of an immediate duty is to statesmen, as to all mankind, the first test of competence. While rebels are preparing to enter the field, there is no use in hinting at the future expediency of undefined legislation.

INDIA.

ALTHOUGH the objections to Lord DE GREY's appointment are numerous and indisputable, it must be acknowledged that one of the first questions with which he will have to deal is a question which he is very well qualified to determine. The Commission appointed to inquire into the ancient and ceaseless grievances of the Indian officers has reported that some concessions ought to be made to the complainants. It was inevitable that, in so great and so sudden a change as the transformation of a local into an Imperial army, some individuals would receive harsh treatment from the application of rules that were honestly conceived to be equitable, and which, on the whole, were fair enough. The correspondence published by the Commissioners in their Report shows that Sir CHARLES WOOD was most sincerely anxious to do right, and that in general he was successful. He was, of course, right in an unpleasant way, and, when he could show that a complainant was in error, he showed it with a disagreeable perspicuity. But, considering the many difficulties to be encountered—the jealous suspicions of old Indian officers, the exactions of the Horse Guards, and the supreme necessity of not burdening the finance of India with too heavy a load—Sir CHARLES WOOD may be said to have done his duty very well. On two points, however—one referring to the promotion of lieutenant-colonels, and the other to the impediments to regimental promotion caused by some of the rules regarding officers in the Staff Corps—the Commissioners think that something still remains to be done in order to meet the fair demands of the complainants. Lord DE GREY is as well suited as any man to settle the few points still in dispute, and it will be a graceful and pleasant task, as a beginning of his new official life, to confer a benefit upon men who have deserved to be treated as well as their country can afford to treat them. Nor is there any pressing question in India itself as to which Lord DE GREY can easily go wrong. Things are very quiet there now, and, with Sir JOHN LAWRENCE at the head of the local Government, his nominal chief in England can scarcely get into any very great scrape. It is now more than two years since Sir JOHN LAWRENCE became Governor-General; and, as those who knew the situation of Indian affairs anticipated, no marked event has arisen to show the peculiar excellences which he would be sure to exhibit in a moment of crisis and difficulty. He has not had much more work to do than falls in the ordinary routine of a Governor-General. But even in this he has attained something of a special distinction. With his great power of work, and of making others work, he has cleared off all the arrears in every department of Government, and he and his Council may now think only of the present and the future, and not of the past. Officials who have been made to do a little more than they had been accustomed to do, naturally grumble at their taskmasters. But this is a very passing displeasure, and Indian society is sure to do justice in the long run to the merits of his administration, more especially as he has now remedied the only serious mistake he has made, and has got rid, at least for a time, of a Secretary who has managed to give an air of pettiness and repulsiveness to the establishment of one of the most hospitable, generous, and sociable of men.

There are, too, questions which are much more than questions of detail, and yet must necessarily be settled in India. The Bhootan war is perhaps one of them. We have nothing whatever to gain by chasing the barbarous inhabitants of those remote and inaccessible mountains into their last strongholds. But we have made a treaty, and the terms of the treaty implied that, unless the satisfaction for which we stipulated in the treaty was given us, we should exact it for ourselves. Most unfortunately, the Bhootan chiefs have got two of our guns, and we have in a manner pledged ourselves to get these two guns back. They were not taken from us, but our Sepoys abandoned them, and we have chosen to treat it as a point of honour to get them back again. Bhootan appears to be governed in a manner that may entail some practical inconveniences, but is admirably adapted for the negotiating of treaties after the Asiatic pattern. There are

two Rajahs who represent, or are supposed on the analogy of Japan to represent, the spiritual and temporal power, but who are only specious and respectable dummies. The real power resides in a mountain robber, who lives at a place called Tongso, and who is known as the Tongso PENLOW. When strong, energetic, abominable people like Englishmen come nearer to Bhootan than is agreeable, the two dummies come down, salute and are saluted, and agree to any terms that may be desired, provided only that the intruders will go away, and that the Tongso PENLOW will be pleased to consider the treaty binding upon him. Directly the intruders have gone away, the astute PENLOW, safe in the undiscovered recesses of Tongso, comes to the conclusion that the treaty is of no good to him, and that he had better repudiate it. This is what has now happened, and as we are many hundred miles away, and as he has got our guns, he thinks he may as well keep them. It will be for Sir JOHN LAWRENCE to decide whether, at any cost and at all hazards, these guns must be won back by force, or a heavy penalty exacted in lieu of them; or whether we can afford to treat our discomfiture as unimportant, and be indifferent to whatever diminution of our prestige may be occasioned. The answer must depend on an accurate appreciation of Indian feeling; and the local government is a better judge of this than any English statesman at home could be. In the same way, Law Reform is necessarily in many respects a matter that must be dealt with on the spot. Mr. MAINE is pushing forward some legal measures of considerable utility, and of which all that can be said is that, if they suit India, they are not only free from theoretical objections, but are full of many theoretical excellencies. The English Partnership Act of last Session, by which a stranger was permitted to lend to a trading firm, with a share of profits and without incurring the risks of a partner, has been introduced in India; but Mr. MAINE has most properly omitted the absurd addition to the Act by which it was rendered practically inoperative, and which provided that the claim of this particular creditor for his advance should be postponed to the claims of other creditors. A measure has also been prepared for releasing married converts from the tie of marriage that binds them to their unconverted spouse, in case that the member of the conjugal pair that still remains faithful to the old creed distinctly refuses to live with the votary of the new one. A Christian convert may easily have some difficulty in persuading his wife to follow his example, for she is less open to the influences that have told on him, and is more subservient to the prejudices of the very narrow circle in which she necessarily passes her life. The husband can, after a certain delay, call on a magistrate to ask her whether she is willing to live with him, and if she refuses, and after a proper time for reconsideration repeats her refusal, a divorce will be decreed, and the husband will be freed, we presume, from all liability to maintain her. This will be a strong inducement to her friends to urge her to live with him, and there may thus be an impulse given to forced conversions which is to be regretted, but which is a less evil than that of tying a man for life to a woman who will not live with him on account of his creed.

While, however, it is true that matters like the Bhootan war and Law Reform must be settled in India, even if the English authorities only have to adopt and pass judgment on what has been decided there, yet there are many Indian questions on which the SECRETARY OF STATE here ought to be the primary authority. None of these questions happen at the present moment to raise any very important difficulties, but still each of them carries difficulties enough with it to make the change from a man who understood them to a man who is totally ignorant of them a very perceptible one. It is by no means easy, for example, to decide how far and in what way new public works ought to be pushed forward. That railways and works of irrigation are excellent things in themselves, and very much needed in India, no one will deny. But there are many new and intricate points in the decision of the mode and conditions of carrying out works of the most obvious utility. The Indian railways have been formed by offering to capitalists a guarantee of 5 per cent. and a chance of future profits. But this plan, although the best probably that could have been adopted at the outset, has led to a grievous waste of money and a heavy liability which the Indian Government has to meet. For, the English public being willing to subscribe whatever money is asked for on a five per cent. guarantee, the constructors of the railways have had no motive for economy, and there are no dissatisfied shareholders to protest against extravagant outlay or expenditure. Now that the

system has been established, however, it is not very easy to stop it. Sir CHARLES WOOD announced that he would not give any further guarantees of percentage, and that new lines must be made on some new principle. But the old lines have extra works, and bridges, and branches, that must be made if they are to be really useful. For this further expenditure the old guarantee must be continued, and it is obvious that, so long as the market is flooded with new issues of guaranteed stock, no unguaranteed stock can have a chance of floating. Irrigation, again, is very necessary, and ought to be very profitable; but the Government has reason to fear lest English Companies may get into interminable trouble with the petty cultivators through whose lands the conduits are laid, and who believe in no justice except that of the State. The difficulty is to get independent capitalists to find the money, and yet be content that the Government should control, or even manage, the actual working. Terms might of course be devised that would be sure to tempt capitalists, but then those terms might be so high as to be unjust and burdensome to India. Lord DE GREY will also find it rather puzzling to decide what is to be done with the Indian currency, for certainly something ought to be done to terminante the barbarous custom of transmitting specie in discharge of every payment. The Indian public has not reaped nearly as much benefit from the issue of Government notes as it ought to have done. Lord DE GREY has therefore plenty of work before him, and probably, by the time when he is just beginning to be awakened to a sense of the responsibility he has undertaken, a DERBY Government may come into office, and he may have learnt his little rudimentary lesson in vain.

LORD PALMERSTON.

THE proposal to erect a monument to Lord PALMERSTON is in harmony with public feeling, although Mr. BERESFORD HOPE was too sanguine or too exacting in expressing a hope that Westminster will not be disgraced by another barbarous work. The omnipotence of Parliament is insufficient to produce a noble monument; but the House of Commons gives to its deceased leader all it can—a vote. The orator supplies some of the too probable deficiencies of the sculptor in commemorating Lord PALMERSTON's name. Mr. GLADSTONE proposed the resolution with excellent taste, saying neither too much nor too little for the occasion. The same topic has, within a few months, employed many pens and tongues, and it was impossible to miss in a verbal portrait the lines which constitute a superficial likeness. One characteristic feature was added by Mr. GLADSTONE when he described the remarkable closeness of correspondence between Lord PALMERSTON's words and the meaning which he intended to express. Hesitation and baldness of style are not the highest oratorical qualities, but an able and successful man knows how to profit even by his natural defects. There is no doubt that awkwardness of expression sometimes seems to indicate sincerity. It was not Lord PALMERSTON's habit to propound original truths in the ordinary course of Parliamentary discussion, although, on rare occasions, he generalized maxims of policy into popular sayings. In his later years of office he was thoroughly understood and liked by his audience; and the greatest orator can attain no more solid or useful success. His long tenure of power, and his national and European fame, were not due to his habitual employment of prosaic language; but a statesman of great capacity and achievement may safely indulge in commonplace. According to the old illustration, the cross-bow of eloquence and argument is more complicated in construction, and more uniform in operation, than the long-bow of personal authority. The transparency which Mr. GLADSTONE justly attributes to Lord PALMERSTON's Parliamentary thoughts and utterances was welcome, because the intentions of a powerful Minister were intrinsically interesting. The heaven-descended gift of self-knowledge is always included in the endowments of a successful leader of men. Lord PALMERSTON had too much tact to affect any character but his own, and he knew how to make the most of good humour, good spirits, and habitual indifference to complicated problems. A foreign visitor, after attending the House of Commons at the beginning of the century, expressed his admiration for Mr. Pitt by declaring that he was a schoolmaster presiding over a crowd of pupils. If he had come to England sixty years later, he might have seen power transferred from the master to the genial, active, and adroit captain of the playground, who was content that some of his rivals should be better scholars while he represented with unequalled fidelity the tastes and the associations of the majority. Sir ROBERT

PEEL purchased, with a great sum of knowledge and of skill, a still more effective control over the House of Commons. Lord PALMERSTON, when he had overcome the difficulties of inexperience in managing the House, appeared to have been born to command it.

It was true, as Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he was consistent and zealous in two or three great political questions. He believed in the superiority of constitutional freedom to despotism and to democracy, both before and after his convictions were generally popular and fashionable. The public opinion to which he appealed in his famous speech on Portugal was a vague but not unmeaning phrase, which indicated at the same time the traditional English creed and the tendencies which were likely to prevail in foreign countries. In the forty years which have since elapsed, Lord PALMERSTON's anticipations have been often realized, and sometimes disappointed. France has, during that time, been governed for eighteen years under a Parliamentary system, and for eighteen years it has tried a provisional Republic and a brilliant experiment of intelligent absolutism. Spain, Prussia, Austria, and many minor States have approximated more or less closely to the English constitutional type; and in every instance Lord PALMERSTON, regardless of occasional failure and of frequent rebuffs, encouraged the Liberal party by professed sympathy, and in one or two cases by material assistance. The estimation in which he was held by foreign Courts bore an inverse ratio to his popularity at home. German Princes and Ministers still repeat the couplet which affirms that if the devil has a son, it is, beyond question, PALMERSTON. A graver expression of insurmountable antagonism may be found in every page of M. GUIZOT's voluminous memoirs. The French statesman is still irritated by the memory of an opponent who not only crossed his policy on every occasion, but jarred against all his habits of thought by an insular roughness and jovial incredulity. The students of M. GUIZOT's autobiography know, on the best authority, that in his whole career the Minister of LOUIS PHILIPPE never acted except on the loftiest motives, and that he seldom made a mistake. Lord ABERDEEN's determination to maintain the cordial understanding with France is the theme of M. GUIZOT's constant eulogy; and he is barely satisfied with the conduct of Sir ROBERT PEEL, who was sometimes more suspicious and less placable than his colleague. Lord PALMERSTON is represented as the embodiment of prejudice, of obstinacy, and of injustice. As M. GUIZOT is not known to have made a joke during his political life, he probably considers that his veteran opponent was guilty of intolerable levity. A disposition to offend foreign Courts is a fault in a statesman; but Lord PALMERSTON found compensation in the respect with which he was regarded by Continental Liberals, and in the belief of his countrymen that, in the words of Lord RUSSELL, "he was not the Minister of France, or of Russia, or of Austria, but the Minister of England."

It was a condition of Lord PALMERSTON's unexampled prosperity that foreign policy should, during his tenure of supreme power, occupy public attention almost to the exclusion of domestic questions. His usual good fortune attended him when he was temporarily relegated into the second rank on the formation of Lord ABERDEEN's Government. Neither Lord PALMERSTON nor any other Minister could have conducted the earlier part of the Russian war without disaster, at a time when the army and the military administration were in the lowest state of efficiency. The gallant efforts of the Duke of NEWCASTLE to cope with insurmountable difficulties turned general attention to the Minister who was wasting his great powers in the routine duties of the Home Office. When Lord PALMERSTON became Prime Minister, at the beginning of 1855, the worst part of the siege of Sebastopol was over; the country was making the utmost exertion to redeem past neglect, and the final victory was already certain. The rest of Lord PALMERSTON's career has been often discussed, and there is little difference of opinion as to his merits and public services. His death seems to have occurred at a time when other qualities are required to deal with new political questions. If his successor and eulogist can acquire and retain a similar place in the confidence of the country, all disinterested patriots will rejoice in a success which will be a public benefit. At the distant day when some future orator proposes for Mr. GLADSTONE a monument in Westminster Abbey, it will be his duty to expatiate on an assemblage of great qualities entirely dissimilar to those which have been truly and eloquently ascribed to Lord PALMERSTON.

WEAK GOVERNMENT.

THERE was a time in our Parliamentary history when the Ministers of the Crown gave their votes, or proposed measures of public policy, in either House, as independent members of Parliament rather than as members of a united Government. The period of CHARLES II. and of WILLIAM III. abounds in instances of Ministers acting, not only independently of each other, but even in opposition to each other, and with the least possible regard for the interest of the country, though frequently with a strong regard for the interests of the Crown or the wishes of the monarch. Such a state of things was probably natural in the early days of youthful institutions, impatient to develop an immature vigour. But whatever strength might be indicated by this practice, or whatever independence it might seem to argue on the part of individual Ministers, it was certainly incompatible with the harmony and stability of Government. However necessary freedom of speech may be, and however desirable fulness of speech may be, in an assembly which derives its title from its speaking qualities, the world soon found out that, like everything else, this attribute was good only at certain times and under certain limitations. It might be as amusing as a play or as instructive as a schoolman's thesis to hear a Lord President inveigh against a Lord Treasurer, or a Secretary for one Department launch his indignation against the Secretary for another; but the system which permitted such diversions wasted power which, husbanded and concentrated, would be invaluable for the maintenance of national greatness and the assertion of national honour. It has been only rarely since the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty that the unity of a Cabinet has been disjointed and its strength impaired by the personal vanity, jealousy, or intrigue of its members, and their disregard of that discipline which welds them into one organic whole. The same principle which exacts joint action exacts also initiatory action. A very little experience sufficed to demonstrate that an Administration which owed its existence to Parliament was better qualified to direct legislation than the ablest or most zealous unofficial members acting with fragmentary and desultory concert. No private members of Parliament can have the influence or the following that a Government can command; and, speaking generally, no measure which does not emanate from the Government is likely to have half the support which is given to one that is stamped with the authority of Government.

If there is one truism more familiar than another, it is the truism that the QUEEN'S Government is expected to initiate the most important measures of national legislation. It is a truism, however, which HER MAJESTY'S present Ministers seem either to have forgotten or never to have known. At the present moment we seem to be drifting back to some palaeozoic period of Parliamentary history, when Cabinets illustrated the beauties of internal dissension, and legislation exemplified by turns the purpose of half a Ministry or the fitful vigour of an Opposition. Two great subjects are occupying the public mind. One has forced itself on our attention by its magnitude and its terrors. The other has been dangled before our eyes for months by the Ministry. On both of these it was only charitable to suppose that the Administration had some fixed idea and some concerted plan. Yet on both of them it seems as uncertain and as irresolute as if it were not the responsible Government of the QUEEN, but a fortuitous concourse of irresponsible private members. From the day of the QUEEN'S Speech the conduct of Ministers has been one continuous course of uncertainty, want of purpose, and want of will. For four or five months they have seen a murrain of appalling destructiveness grow in strength and extent until half the country is scared with the prospect of actual famine; yet, when Parliament met, they had no Bill ready to meet the urgent calamity. After Parliament met, and members in both Houses had demanded the intervention of the Government, a Bill was brought forward stamped with the parental features of indecision and perplexity. It soon became apparent that all its main principles were to be dictated by the Opposition, or by independent members. The Government Commissioners had pointed out the inefficacy of the ordinary remedial measures. Analogy and common sense had shown that the only hope of staying the pest lay in stamping it out. Yet all the provisions designed for this end have been inserted, suggested, or essentially altered, by members unconnected with the Government. Isolation, slaughtering, compensation, suspension of railway transit, restrictions on the movement of cattle on the high roads—all these are wholly or partly due to members speaking in

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their personal capacity, not to the Cabinet as an entirety. But this is not all. While the Government introduces and carries one Bill for the abatement of the infection, a private member introduces and carries another Bill for purposes closely connected, and in fact almost identical, with those of the former. We suspect that there is no precedent for two Bills, supplementary to each other, being concurrently introduced by a Cabinet and a private member of Parliament. Nor is there, so far as we can see, any justification for a practice so unusual. The Government has the amplest means of collecting information from all quarters; it has the greatest resources for organizing inspection and repression. It therefore should charge itself with the duty of preparing those enactments the execution of which will mainly devolve upon itself. By shirking this duty it disregards the traditions of English government, and tends to throw Parliament back into that legislative chaos from which it has for nearly two centuries been happily emancipated. To complete the spectacle of imbecility, when the Ministerial Bill had reached the quiet haven of the Lords' Committee, up jumped a noble hanger-on of the Government with an amendment directed, like Mr. BRIGHT's unsuccessful onslaught, to the enfeebling of that curative extirpation of the disease on which the Commons had insisted; and he succeeded in scoring the vote of the PRIVY SEAL and the voice of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL against their colleagues, their own Bill, and the effective stamping out of the rinderpest.

The apologists of the Ministry will doubtless tell us that the details of a Cattle Bill involve no great constitutional principle; that it matters little whether a Government or an individual proposes to isolate healthy, and slaughter infected, beasts. The answer is, that the Government of the country ought not to be above attending to anything which may mitigate a great national calamity, and that it abdicates one of its chief functions when it transfers this duty to unofficial persons. The apology, moreover, is defective in its basis. Weaknesses generally run in couples, and the weakness of the present Administration is no exception to a rule of universal application. The same doubt and vacillation which are exhibited with respect to the cattle disease are exhibited with respect to a Reform Bill. Lord RUSSELL is besieged by anxious deputations at the Treasury, and Mr. GLADSTONE is solicited by ingenious inquirers in Parliament; but the importunate labours of each are equally in vain. The oracle of the Lower House is as inscrutable as that of the Upper. The conclusion at which ordinary people have arrived is, that Ministers have made up their minds just as little on the Reform question as they had done on the Cattle question, and that they will trust themselves to the current of events in the one case, as they have trusted themselves in the other. A Reform Bill, it is assumed, there must be; not because the educated intelligence and enterprising opulence of the country have clamoured for it, but because the Whigs have talked themselves into it, and are now entangled in the meshes of their own promises. But up to this moment it is believed that no three members of the Cabinet are agreed as to what ought to be the nature of the Bill. Is it to be a single-barrelled or a double-barrelled Bill? Is there to be a lateral or only a vertical extension of the suffrage? Is this to be accompanied by a redistribution of seats; or are the operatives of the great Northern cities to be made more powerful than ever, and the operatives of other towns to remain just as they are now? These are the questions which people ask, and which the Ministry apparently leave to time, to chance, and the development of opinion in the House of Commons. If no one should appear to take much interest in the matter, then, doubtless, the smallest of mice will creep out of the mountain of Whig promises. But if, on the other hand, the artisans should give signs of genuine excitement, if educated men should begin generally to take an active interest in the question, and the desire for a really comprehensive measure to manifest itself in the House of Commons, then we may expect that on some afternoon towards Easter Mr. GLADSTONE will come down to the House determined to outvie Mr. BRIGHT in a studied eulogy on the virtues of the working-man, and a rhetorical panegyric on the progress of democracy.

This system is undoubtedly very convenient to Ministers. It saves a world of trouble both in thinking and in drafting Acts. Mr. GLADSTONE probably is prepared to prove by the finest of arguments that it is in exact conformity to the genius of the British Constitution. But although it would be unconstitutional, even if it were not impossible, for any Administration to govern the country without possessing the confidence of the

House of Commons, this confidence is not to be earned by the trimming and time-serving obsequiousness which the present Government so persistently displays. The House expects the Minister to lead it, but Mr. GLADSTONE is now following rather than leading it. The novelty of this procedure may possibly have a temporary charm; but it can only be temporary. Those only who respect themselves succeed in winning the respect of others. No Government which voluntarily cedes its own right of initiating legislation to the casual occupants of the Opposition and independent benches can count on long retaining its own position. No Government can hope to be either respected or supported which allows its members to vote against each other on momentous questions. And no Government would bequeath to history a more ignoble memory than one which, by paltering with the manifest duties of its station, brought back into a busy and earnest age the discords, intrigues, contradictions, and corruptions which nearly choked the vitality of Parliament in the latter years of the STUART dynasty.

RICH UNCLES.

If the rich uncle were only half as common an institution in real life as he is on the stage or in a novel, the world would be a cheerier place than it is, and moralists would be compelled to admit that virtue still was to be found upon the earth, perched happily and pleasantly on one or other of the collateral branches in every family tree. In the pictures they draw of society and its manners, novelists unfortunately are too fond of gratifying, on paper and in fancy, the yearnings of the human heart after the unattainable. The curate whose sermons are never too long, and always make his hearers think; the officer who carries the kid glove of his old garrison flame for thirty years next his heart, and has it on his person when he falls at the head of the forlorn hope; the self-sacrificing beauty who resigns her lover to a rival; the faithful college chum who has cherished a mutual attachment for his friend's hardly-used wife for half a century, and only mentions it in a whisper on his death-bed—all are so many creations by means of which the sort of people who write romances express their passion for the ideal. But perhaps there is no portrait so completely suggestive of the impossible and the intangible as the portrait of that imaginary uncle who never appears except to make other people happy, and who always dies at the right moment. Our imaginations are fired at a very early age by the description, and we go through life sighing and longing for this noble being who never is, but always is to be. *Exoriare aliquid* is our constant but fruitless hope. Where, oh where, is that benevolent individual in gaunters of whom we have read so much, whose only anxiety is that we should marry the object of our affections as soon as the license can be procured, who burns to enjoy the pleasures of matrimonial happiness by proxy only, and whose reward is to be allowed in return to kiss his nieces-in-law and their children as often as he pleases when they come down to breakfast in the morning? All of us have learnt to admire the princely munificence of Mr. Peabody. But every time the newspapers present us with a new instance of his liberality, the sad thought cannot but force itself on the minds of many, how it is that there are so few Peabodys in private domestic life, who have been imbued with the sound Scriptural maxim that charity begins at home, and with a proper sense of the privileges and opportunities of those whom Providence has blessed with a lively and varied assortment of nephews and of nieces. The tide of human affairs is influenced, as we all know, by the merest accidents. It seems so hard that what is should have been irrevocably separated by some little trivial barrier from what might have been. If grandfathers and grandmothers had lived long enough to have had one more child before they died, if their supernumerary offspring had been wisely despatched at once to India, had amassed a colossal fortune in the society of Nabobs and of Begums, and had finally come home, after a long absence, with a fatal liver complaint, and with a rooted desire to live in the happiness of his relatives, this might have been a bright and a beautiful world in spite of everything. We can all conceive how pleased we should have been to have smoothed our beloved Peabody's pillow, and to have remembered him in our prayers. *Dis alter visum.* There are few of us to whom Providence has not seen fit to deny this harmless gratification; and when we look at life as it is, and turn from the melancholy spectacle to the three-volume novels and the dramas of the day, it is indeed almost exasperating to see how authors and authoresses persist in pouring upon their heroes and their heroines such golden showers of unspeakably precious kinsmen in weak health.

Regret under such circumstances, with well-regulated minds, ought never to take the lower form of a selfish sentiment, and it is wiser and nobler to be able to base it on a calculation of what the human race loses by the infrequency of such elevating spectacles. If rich uncles were not as rare birds as black swans, the feminine half of the world would not be able to go on saying, with such a terrible show of truth, that a bachelor's life is necessarily selfish. Women constantly complain of the gross injustice of the reproach that rests on the character of an old maid. Old maids are often very charming people, though afflicted perhaps, as a rule, with too

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absorbing an admiration of popular preachers; and if marriages are made in Heaven, it is not unnatural that Heaven should keep some of the best specimens of womanly virtue for itself. There may, moreover, be rich aunts as well as rich uncles, and it would be improper and imprudent to pass a sweeping condemnation on those who have chosen to play the part of wallflowers at life's festive ball. If celibacy in woman is a fault, it is a fault which may be redeemed by a devoted desire to make the younger members of her family prosperous and wealthy. But, after all that has been said, it is fair to recollect that old maids are not visited with half the reproaches which feminine critics shower on the head of that much-abused being, the irretrievable old bachelor. The irretrievable bachelor is a sort of social Hercules target, the bare existence of which is a slur upon the power and precision of feminine artillery. Something must be done to put a stop to his attitude of offensive impenetrability, and his unpopularity may be taken as a proof that it is as dangerous in some cases to resist successfully as to be gracefully vanquished. The male heart, to start with, is desperately wicked, but its follies and failings are never painted in such gloomy colours as when it has shown an ill-advised intention to lead a single life. This is why Club dinners and whist and smoking are so generally admitted, by feminine moralists, to be hopelessly prejudicial to the character. They are not only in theory pernicious, but they are the avowed enjoyments of the bachelor. The gallant knight who loves and rides away is in his degree a more admirable creature than the unknightly craven who never falls in love at all, and who provokingly sits still over his Club cigar. The moral indignation he very naturally excites is so considerable that the species would have become extinct long ago if it were not for one redeeming feature in their case. When disapprobation of the bachelor's habits is on the very eve of rising to a storm, there is one saving virtue that interposes and rescues him from annihilation. Unmarried blessedness would be outlawed by the verdict of society if it were not for the fact that the irretrievable bachelor may yet retrieve himself by turning into a rich uncle, and becoming a blessing, if not a credit, to mankind. It is thus—a feminine philosopher will perhaps conclude—that we are brought to see how, in the great economy of nature, there is no such thing as utter ruin and degradation. Fallen as he seems to be at the first glance, the bachelor may live to prove that his career has been in no degree wasted or unprofitable. If there were only more specimens of so creditable a conversion, a bachelor's profession would end by being considered a noble and disinterested one. In answer to the invidious question why on earth he did not marry, the bachelor would only have to reply, "I do not marry because it is my ambition to be a rich uncle."

A rich uncle has this advantage further, that he carries into domestic life an example of unselfishness and disinterested solicitude for the welfare of his kind. In return for the imputation of selfishness that is so freely bestowed upon them, bachelors might with plausibility retort that married life is not, upon the whole, productive of social sympathy and magnanimity. A partnership is not necessarily less egotistical than a single speculator, and self-interest often perambulates the world in couples. Towards their husbands and their children Englishwomen are almost uniformly unselfish, but beyond their husbands, their children, and their own social success, they show commonly a disposition to be indifferent to the outside world; and the result is, that their influence is weakened, and their powers of conversation proportionally impaired. If this be true, domesticity has its drawbacks, as well as its delights. An Englishwoman's pleasures are simple, but possibly somewhat narrow. She is keenly solicitous about her husband's advancement in the world, and measures it carefully by the amount of social consideration bestowed upon herself. She likes her children to be healthy, handsome, and admired, and devotes herself heroically to their best interests. By the time she has got to the extreme edge of her family circle, her enthusiasm is generally exhausted; and literature or politics she cares for so far only as they are likely to affect or interest those in whose welfare she is concerned. A rich bachelor at a domestic fireside is a perpetual protest against this exclusiveness of view, and is in his way less of an egotist than the mother whose absolute devotion to her family he so much admires. Kind as he is, and intimate as he is, his fair *protégé* would see him broiled alive before she would allow a single hair to be harmed of her husband's or her children's heads; and a soft unutterable sense of contingent benefits sometimes, perhaps, suffuses even her real affection for himself. Considering the nobility of the nature of women, the fact that after marriage they are impregnated with this sort of feeling, for which selfishness is too hard a name, is possibly a discredit rather to their husbands than to their own education. If men sought less exclusively to absorb every thought of the women who are under their control, the character of women would be more chivalrous after marriage than it is. Romance and impulsiveness belong chiefly to unmarried girls. They will enter into and appreciate the not uncommon pride which now and then makes a man abandon fame and fortune sooner than stoop to pick them up. It is equally certain that, when women marry, this kind of enthusiasm sobers down. In the cause of those to whom they are attached they remain as generous as ever; but with all generosity which threatens to interfere with the fortunes of their husbands or their children they have but little sympathy. Humanity and patriotism, and even charity, fail in their eyes when contrasted with the ties of domesticity. A being who is content with the private felicity of others, and who looks for no private felicity of his

own, would accordingly be a novel sight at a family gathering. He would be entitled to rank as an exception to the law of domesticity, the theory of which is that no ties are permanently strong except the ties of maternity or marriage. Rich uncles are not as easily to be met with as the natural Adam could wish, but when they do occur they are probably less egotistical than their fortunate nephews and nieces.

The pleasures of benevolence which a rich uncle may be considered to enjoy are indeed compared by a great Greek philosopher to the pleasures of paternity; and it may be that in exceptional cases they even supply the place of the latter. Human nature is in the habit of boasting of its instincts, but a large proportion of the feelings we term instinctive are evidently to be accounted for on a simpler though less flattering theory. That human nature possesses any instincts, properly so-called, has been denied, may be doubted, and certainly never can be shown to demonstration. It is by no means certain that, after allowances made for the influence of sentiment, interest, and reason, a father would be naturally drawn towards his son; and the affection of human beings for their offspring is possibly made up of a powerful and perfect union of the three. However this may be, it is tolerably clear that the three are nowhere so completely united as in the case of the relation between parents and their children; and the rich uncle whose mission is to bring prosperity to his belongings can at least enjoy parental pleasures in a secondary and imperfect way. It is, in truth, the only fashion left in which a man can enjoy them without entering into the precarious speculation of marriage, or without sinning against social decorum and incurring the social penalties imposed upon the sinner. The skeleton, however, in every benevolent man's closet is and must be the reflection that it is almost impossible in advanced life, when the power of exciting romantic attachments is gone, to bind others to us, except, indeed, by the glittering but fragile tie of gratitude. That rich uncle is a happy and exceptional personage who can bring those about him to identify their interests with his own, and to feel bound to him by the sentiment that unites children to their parents. To achieve this result, something more than the benefactions of a kind old gentleman are usually necessary, unless accompanied by qualities that command enthusiasm and regard. Even a millionaire cannot take affection by storm, or break through the circle of family reserve, as Jupiter broke through the guards of Danae, in a shower of gold. Those who wish to live in the affections of others had better not wait to make the effort till they are old and wealthy, but begin betimes when they are young.

FOUR MILLION SERMONS A YEAR.

STATISTICAL statements have sometimes a wonderful power over our imaginations. They give distinct form to truths which are slumbering indistinctly in our consciousness. We are startled when we are told that the Ganges bears down hourly a mass of deposit equal to so many Egyptian pyramids, or that a penny put out to compound interest in the time of Adam would now be worth many hundred globes of solid gold, each equal in size to the earth. But there are cases where the mere enunciation of bare figures is more surprising than these ornate and sophisticated statements. We should shudder at the bare assertion, if we believed it to be well-founded, that twenty thousand barrels of measly pork were weekly consumed in London, or that ten men of otherwise sound understanding believed in Dr. Cumming's interpretations of the prophecies. We have been startled in the same way by the calculation that four million sermons are delivered annually in England. It reveals to us a vista of human misery of which we had previously a very faint conception. We had known vaguely that the account was something lamentable; but, like a spendthrift who has never ventured to look his debts in the face, we had no distinct conception of the awful truth. It must, indeed, be said that all such statistical formulas involve a certain unfairness. They depend upon a very simple artifice, which is not always detected. Thus a member of the Peace Society will tell us that England has spent a hundred millions upon war-like preparations within the last few years. He will proceed to reckon up the number of schools that might have been founded, and the amount of good that might have been done, if the same sum had been spent upon philanthropical projects. He relies upon our tacitly making the comparison between our income for one year and the enormous sum arrived at by taking the expenditure of several years. He omits at any rate to state explicitly that, after all, it is only a small fraction of the amount which has been received during the same period. And thus, when we hear of four million sermons, the mind reels under the thought; it forgets that even this vast stream of pulpit eloquence is a mere rivulet in comparison with the vast floods of vapid eloquence which are poured upon us from all quarters. A Commission lately decided that, vast as was the injury done by human jaws to the annual shoals of herrings, it was a trifle in comparison with the consumption of sea-fowl, porpoises, seals, and dogfish. And even the yearly mass of sermons is a molehill in comparison with the vast mountains of rubbish discharged from other quarters. The twaddle which is talked in private life, spouted in popular addresses, and printed in cheap publications, is perhaps sufficient to reduce even the yearly accumulation of sermons to insignificance. We cannot, indeed, have accurate statistics upon this matter, but we fear that the weekly half-hour during which we are preached

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upon is only a fraction of the time which most men devote to laying in stores of feeble platitudes.

Whatever consolation may be derived from such reflections as these, it is undeniable that the fact is sufficiently lamentable. Four million sermons represent, under any circumstances, a considerable aggregate of discomfort. If we deduct a liberal percentage for sermons which really express a certain quantity of thought, and produce a certain effect upon the understandings of the audience—and one in a hundred is certainly a very ample allowance for such performances—there will still remain 3,960,000 aggregations of meaningless phrases. In outward form, they will be the expression of ideas; they will be more or less grammatical; and the language in which they are worded will approximate more or less loosely to English. But it is sad to think of the torture by which they have been produced, and to which they subject their hearers. A Sheffield knife-grinder has to put himself into very uncomfortable attitudes, but then he turns out something that will shave. Tupperian poetry is very poor stuff, but it can be manufactured easily by the team. The unfortunate sermon-maker, however, cramps his intellect and racks his brains in order to produce something which is, if possible, a greater nuisance to the hearer than to the speaker. A little of the compassion which is lavished upon the workmen in unhealthy trades might very well be reserved for the sermon market. A wretched young man who has just escaped the torments of a pass-examination has an almost insoluble problem set before him. He has to squeeze out of a brain not naturally very full, fresh thoughts upon the oldest of all topics; he is bound to follow a track which thousands of men have made before him, without ever falling exactly into the same ruts. He has before his eyes at once the fear of being too original, and of dropping too servilely into the footsteps of a predecessor. To put together new arguments against a heresy, or new reasons for loving our neighbours, would tax the most powerful invention. It is not wonderful that ninety-nine curates out of a hundred groan hopelessly over their task, and laboriously fill up the interstices between appropriate texts with the set of conventional phrases which approach most nearly to conveying some sort of meaning. We can at any rate pity, if we cannot altogether excuse, those unambitious gentlemen who buy for a shilling a lithographed sermon which looks like manuscript, and spend half-a-crown for additional unction upon grand occasions. The only question is, whether the congregations of these unfortunate beings have not greater claims upon our compassion. It is torture to strain from reluctant brains fifty-two or a hundred and four sermons a year, but it is not much less torture to hear them. The recipient of this variety of eloquence generally oscillates between two mental conditions; he is either carrying on a gallant struggle against a tendency to sleep, or he is tormented by a fidgety desire to argue the other side of the question. Now, if we assume that an average of a hundred people listen, for an average of half an hour, to each of the 3,960,000 discourses throughout one year, it is easy to discover how many years of misery are passed in the aggregate by the congregations of the kingdom.

It would be, of course, unfair to say that these four million sermons are productive of nothing but discomfort to speakers and audience. Besides that liberal estimate of 40,000 decent or tolerable sermons which we have already excepted, there is doubtless a good deal of pleasure derived from the bad ones. There are schoolboys who like smoking cane by way of tobacco, and there are men who have no objection to Cape sherries and Chancellor of the Exchequer's claret. And probably a good deal of innocent satisfaction is derived from the inferior qualities of sermon. There is that part of the British public to which the sermon stands in the place of profane amusements, or whose highest intellectual flight is to the regions in which the curate gives the reins to his logical or rhetorical faculties. There is the numerous part of the congregation—especially of its female members—whose conscience is somehow pleasantly titillated by listening to a sermon; it is the crowning ornament of the service; and, without going through the form of listening to it, they would feel that sufficient attention had not been paid to the services of the day. Even if it were possible that a pause should intervene between the prayers and the sermon, in which those might depart who felt no desire for the latter form of edification, it would be long before many persons would summon up sufficient courage to desert the preacher. Apart from the implied disrespect to the performer, they would not feel that they had sufficiently complied with the established form without listening to his little string of conventional exhortation. The genuine British sentiment, excellent as it is, includes a somewhat superstitious reverence for established forms; and a service without a sermon—good, bad, or indifferent—would appear to most Englishmen like *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark, or a public dinner in which the Queen's health was not duly proposed.

The pleasures, however, of listening to sermons are undeniably of the placid and unexciting order. The absence of preaching would leave a void, but it would not deprive the public of any very animating source of excitement. And, without any deficiency on the part of modern preachers, it is inevitable that this should be the case. There are some causes of a permanent nature, and others more accidental and transitory, which tend to lower the relative value of sermons. That state of feeling can hardly be again brought about in which, as Lord Macaulay says, a preacher like Burnet could see the sands of the hour-glass run out, and then be encouraged by the loud hums of his audience to turn it over again. In the first place, the same change has necessarily

occurred, with regard to preaching, which has affected the value of professors' lectures. No crowds will hurry, unless under very exceptional conditions, to hear a lecturer hold forth upon history or philosophy, for the simple reason that they can buy his effusions, and read them comfortably in their own rooms. A man of established reputation, like Dickens or Thackeray, may attract crowds to hear him out of pure curiosity, when the object is not really to profit by the lecture, but to see the lecturer. Or a skilled experimenter, like Faraday or Tyndall, may collect people to hear explosions, or see prismatic colours, or smell extraordinary odours. But the professor's chair—and, for the same reason, the preacher's pulpit—can never be what it was in the times when there was no effective rival in the shape of cheap books. At the same time, the preacher has certain advantages which, even at the present day, might occasionally enable him to support the competition successfully. The great charm of preaching is the enunciation of some new thought, or at least of some new application of old thought. A new creed makes proselytes, not merely by the slow infiltration of argument, but by the contagion of some living believer. Men catch doctrines as they catch diseases, by the actual presence of some one already infected by them. And it follows that a reformer whose object is to break down the established methods of thought has a great advantage over the conservative who wishes to maintain them. An agitator who has some new theory which is to put the whole world to rights finds just what he wants in the presence of a listening crowd. By their mere contact in the same room, they stimulate each other to the state of excitement which is favourable to new impressions. A man who has a new political or theological theory to produce will be more able than in former times to make it known by writing, but he will never be able to dispense with the advantage of indoctrinating masses of people by *viva voce* addresses. Every new agitation finds some kind of public meeting an essential part of its machinery. Hence, an era of good sermons will generally be an era of reform. Their existence will prove that some new thoughts are gradually forcing their way into the minds of the nation. At the time of the Reformation, powerful preaching was necessarily of more importance than it is now; not merely because preachers had a greater monopoly of the means of stirring up general interest, but because the most religious men of the time were in an aggressive, and therefore an eloquent, frame of mind. But, at the present day, none of these favourable conditions are present. Preachers are generally defending theological principles against attacks from without; they have the disadvantage of proving over again doctrines whose proofs have been advanced hundreds of times before. Even in the case of undeniable truths, it would be more easy to wax eloquent in proving that the circle can be squared than in demonstrating that it cannot; because one statement would seem to call up new views of science, and the other would at best revive old ones worn almost threadbare. And thus, when the assailants of orthodoxy do not get into the pulpit, there is little chance of growing eloquent in reasserting ancient doctrines against an absent enemy. In consequence of which, an overwhelming proportion of the four million annual essays are, not to speak irreverently, deadly dull.

MR. MILL IN PARLIAMENT.

THE House of Commons is supposed to be forming that view about Mr. Mill which the first Lord Holland expressed about Burke, when he told his son, Charles James Fox, that "he supposed Mr. Burke was a wonderfully clever man, but that he did not like those clever fellows who could not plainly say Yes or No to any question you asked them." This is the usual temper of practical politicians, and indeed, so far, the House represents the general leaning of public opinion. The clever fellows who cannot satisfy themselves with the plain Yes and No which are good enough for their neighbours are never popular outside very narrow circles. Mr. Mill's conduct in the House has certainly not been calculated to enlarge the popularity of "those clever fellows." The people who kept asking what on earth we wanted with a philosopher in Parliament, are jubilant. Those, on the other hand, who insisted that Mr. Mill's election for Westminster was a splendid testimony to the virtues of a democratic constituency, are a little anxious and uneasy. The vote on The O'Donoghue's amendment to the Address, the speeches on the Cattle Plague Bill, and, above all, the speech on the state of Ireland, are interpreted as meaning that "the blue ribbon of representation"—as the seat for Westminster was called by an over-enthusiastic voter—has fallen to a second Bright, only a Bright without eloquence, without a vigour that even foes may respect, who chills rather than influences, and who mimics passion by petulance. Talk of this sort is the effect of a natural reaction against the preposterous expectations which the indiscreet and boundless excitement of Mr. Mill's supporters had raised and spread abroad. It is not the first time that the rashness of disciples has done harm to the real claims of the master. People appeared to expect that Mr. Mill would go down to the House on some great occasion, and deliver himself of an oration of the thunder and lightning stamp, with passages that might be quoted in books of elegant extracts, and suitable for recitation in schools on show-days. As the Stoics maintained that the wise man was a king, and rich and happy, the talkers and writers at the time of Mr. Mill's election supposed that the wise man must also be a great orator and a keen Parliamentary tactician, and a good

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party-man. They declared that we should have another Burke in Parliament, forgetting that Burke was only thirty-five years old when he first entered the House, and that he was an Irishman into the bargain. It must be confessed that those who talked nonsense in this fashion were persons who were least likely to have studied Mr. Mill's books, or to have acquired any just estimate either of the value of what he has contributed to thought, or of its nature and application.

More reasonable people felt in July—and they may still feel—that Mr. Mill's presence in Parliament would have a certain significance, and that he would be likely to exert a certain influence as a critic which would be very useful, and which nobody else could exert with so much force. His few electioneering speeches showed that he possessed both readiness and perspicuity; and of the former, at all events, his repartee to Mr. Lowe's metaphor of the lunatic asylum proves that the Parliamentary atmosphere has not been able to deprive him. It was impossible to suppose that Mr. Mill would content himself with running in a groove. His writings bear no trace of a desire to attract or to conciliate any single prejudice of the public, and it is hard to see why he should have been expected to show a disposition to attract or to conciliate the prejudices of a majority of the representatives of the public. This may be a mark of a stubborn, uncompromising, impracticable spirit, or it may be the mark of the distinction between a philosopher and a good member of Parliament. In neither case is there any ground for the wondering, and lifting of the hands in horror or pity, which may be witnessed in club-windows. Mr. Mill has always maintained—and this is one of the chief doctrines which are carried away from his books—that society is constantly tending to come to a stand-still, to sink into "the deep slumber of decided opinions," to yield itself a contented prey to a deadly lethargy; that in order to counteract all this, and to increase the stock of knowledge and happiness, the most strenuous efforts of the best men are perpetually needed; and that these efforts should never abate, but rather be strengthened, when they happen to encounter the whole force of the current opinions of the day. He fully admits that, in forming an opinion, every wise person will modify the conclusions from one practical maxim by conclusions drawn from some antagonistic maxim. In a very well-known passage he has pointed out how the errors of political philosophy in France may be traced to the uncompromising spirit of French journalists and orators, who always argue that a certain measure ought to be adopted because it follows from the principle on which the form of government is founded, when, in truth, a much better argument would be that it followed from some other principle, and so might confer supplementary benefits. But, of course, there is all the difference imaginable between this philosophic compromise in the prosecution of an opinion, and compromise in enforcing it. A man may hold a view that is moderate in itself, and yet be vehement and immoderate in urging it, and fighting on its behalf. This was pre-eminently the characteristic of the illustrious person whom Lord Holland supposed to be a wonderfully clever man. There is something in the character of the thinker which makes this natural. He has come to his conclusion cautiously and with patience, he is confident of its soundness, and he does not easily endure to see it scouted and snubbed by men who have come to their conclusions they don't know how. Even the exigencies of an election could not induce Mr. Mill to dissemble that he held opinions which, to all but a handful of his constituents, could only appear utterly abominable and monstrous. The enfranchisement of women, the notion of making every elector work a sum in the Rule of Three, the proposal to make insolvency penal, the doctrine that people who cannot afford it should abstain from having children, are even more detestable to the Westminster ten-pounder than to the country squire. Both look upon such ideas as ancient Romans looked upon the monstrous idols and rites of Egypt, and they may be right in their horror. Only it is difficult to understand why they should be astonished because Mr. Mill took an early opportunity of hinting his disapproval of an aristocracy. The expression of such disapproval, it may be said, and with truth, at such a time, was a blunder in Parliamentary tactics. Only what reason was there to suppose that Mr. Mill would be guided by considerations about tactics? The House of Commons is unquestionably a place for passing measures, but it is also a place for discussing them, and the more discussion there is the better does it fulfil its function. Mr. Mill himself has said somewhere, in reply to the sneers about the National Palaver, that he does not know how such an assembly can occupy itself more usefully than in talking. The more numerous the views that are represented the better. Mr. Mill's view about the cattle plague was that the aristocracy ought to pay for the losses. We need not discuss the soundness of such an opinion; but it is just the opinion which it might have been predicted that Mr. Mill would hold, and which, therefore, he was pretty sure not to shrink from enunciating. One cannot in reason suppose that a thinker who comes into the House in the late autumn of life should either sit patiently by for a few years, until he has learnt the temper of those by whom he is surrounded, or that he should abandon all the habits of thought and the practical maxims which have been growing in his mind all his life, because a point of Parliamentary etiquette or momentary policy stands in the way. Mr. Mill holds that those who differ from the multitude in their opinions should lose no chance of giving utterance to such a difference, and it is quite natural, therefore, that he should have taken a line which may be very regrettable and impolitic in the eyes of the public, and which may give him a place in the House very different from that which was

anticipated, but a line, after all, which is only a continuation of his previous tendencies.

The excellent ten-pounder who had never read a line of Mr. Mill's writings, but who fondly hoped that his maiden speech would occupy three or four columns of the *Times*, would be continually interrupted with "loud and prolonged cheering," and would wind up with a superb peroration about the palladium of the Constitution and Britons never being slaves, may look with dismay upon the ten or twelve lines which contain reasoning as close and as compressed as a proposition of Euclid. He did not bargain for this. It was not for a political *pons asinorum* that he threw over his Shelley and his Smith, and gave the cold shoulder to the Marquis of Westminster's nephew. "If this is your philosopher," he will cry, "I'll stick to plain men the next time." But though philosophy teaching by examples may not be to the ten-pounder's taste, it would be very rash to assume that there is no place for it in the House of Commons. Essentially, and before all things, it is a practical assembly; but this is the very reason why the presence of an acute critic from the speculative point of view is most desirable. A member who goes back to principles must be of the highest value among men whose whole training and habits tend to fasten them down in the region of details. Burke, it is true, was a man of this sort, yet he made no mark on the House. But in his day the House was so profoundly corrupt, and measures were passed on considerations so entirely independent of their true merits, or of anything that could be said for or against them, that he had no fair chance. Since the Reform Bill, in spite of the strength which one or two powerful interests have preserved or have gained, debate is not a mere farce. Railway interests and agricultural interests may have a power in a division which it is perhaps not quite wholesome for the community that they should have, but even in conflict with them argument counts for something. For instance, Mr. Mill's first speech effected an important change in the amount of the compensation to be given to the owners of the slaughtered cattle. In an assembly which is really in some degree accessible by argument it is impossible that the ablest of living reasoners should find himself constantly shooting above the heads of his audience, and chopping blocks with a razor. Mr. Mill will never be a favourite speaker. There are probably no rhetorical triumphs before him. He neither thinks nor speaks in a style that is popular or vulgarly attractive. The strong Gyas and the strong Cloanthus will begin to talk whenever he rises, but the leaders will listen, and Gyas and Cloanthus will vote with their leaders. It was said of Adam Smith in the House, in 1797, that "he would persuade the present generation, and govern the next." A similar remark is perhaps only partially applicable to Mr. Mill. Nevertheless, in spite of bad tactics, such a person cannot but carry weight, and be a very valuable authority in the Legislature.

THE BLUE-BOOK ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

II.

THE evidence given by English judges in favour of the retention of capital punishment ought to be placed at the head of any summary. It has, indeed, been ignorantly urged that judges in such a matter speak with some sort of professional bias. To any one who knows what a criminal court of justice is in this country the argument seems singularly superficial. An English judge presiding in a criminal court is almost invariably a worthy model of perfect patience, impartiality, and even clemency. Compared with the rough and ready rule of a Chairman of Quarter Sessions, his equitable administration stands out in remarkable relief; and where the vagaries and volatility of criminal practitioners are loudest and most objectionable, the patient dignity of English judges often interposes to protect the prisoner from the effects of the indiscretion of his own counsel. The testimony of the English Bench is a conclusive answer to the theoretical mares'-nests started by Sir Fitzroy Kelly, and other advocates of the abolition of the punishment of death. Lord Cranworth comes first, who, it will be remembered, was for eleven years a Baron of the Court of Exchequer, and has had considerable experience of criminal cases. He gives it as his decided view that it would be impossible to dispense with the punishment of death in cases of murder. Death is, of all penalties, the most deterrent; and it is, in Lord Cranworth's opinion, extremely important that there should be a general opinion prevailing amongst the criminal class that, whatever guilt they are incurring by crimes of violence, human life had better not fall a sacrifice:—

I do not mean [says Lord Cranworth] that when a person is committing a crime he actually enters into reasoning with himself upon the subject, but I believe that the criminal class generally are imbued with the notion that if death ensues from the crimes in which they are engaged they will be hanged, but that if it does not ensue they will not be hanged. I believe that is a most salutary feeling to operate on their minds.

Lord Cranworth simply disbelieves the paradoxical assertion which, as we saw, was put forward by Mr. Denman and Sergeant Parry, that a culprit thinks the less of being tried for his life because juries in capital cases are cautious of convicting. "I do not think that any criminals I ever saw would say it." He has never known a case where a man has been wrongly executed, and such cases must be so extremely rare that he thinks that consideration may be disregarded. Mr. Baron Bramwell agrees with Lord Cranworth that capital punishment ought to be retained in all

cases of murder. And his experience on one point conflicts with the experience of Mr. Denman. Juries "rightly" require a higher degree of evidence in trials for murder, because the crime is hateful and improbable, but they seldom acquit men of murder merely because they are averse to the infliction of the capital penalty. Mr. Baron Martin dwells strongly, as we saw on a former occasion, on the solemn effect of a capital conviction on the Court, on the bystanders, and, he might have added, on the presiding judge himself. It is "a shocking thing" to take away the life of a culprit as if he were a mere animal, but Baron Martin's experience is not that there is any real unwillingness to convict for murder. And, indeed, with all deference to Mr. Denman, it may be questioned whether Mr. Baron Martin has not theory as well as experience in his favour. A jury which has in its hands the arbitration of life and death, as a rule, naturally excites itself during the proceedings into a state of unusual mental vigour. Every little incident is observed by jurymen in a way in which they do not observe such things when the stake is smaller. Their powers of noticing and remembrance become keener and more susceptible; and even common minds, under the solemn and awakening influence of the occasion, brighten up into intelligence. After Baron Martin we come to Lord Wensleydale, a great and masterly lawyer, who for nearly thirty years has been accustomed to preside as judge over the administration of criminal justice. He is clearly of opinion that capital punishment ought to be retained. It is the "punishment which creates the greatest fear, and makes the greatest impression on the public." It may very often be that murder is committed in a thoughtless moment; but Lord Wensleydale is quite sure that, if you did away with hanging, "murder would be much more common." As a judge of thirty years' practice, he further deserves to be heard in reply to Sir Fitzroy Kelly's groundless theory that the innocent as well as the guilty suffer. Lord Wensleydale's memory, which is perhaps of more authority than Sir Fitzroy's imagination, does not serve him with any case of a conviction which he thought was wrong. Mr. Justice Willes, whose learning and genius will entitle him hereafter to rank as one of the greatest ornaments of a Bar and a Bench which has always been illustrious, is of a like mind. His conclusion in favour of capital punishment deserves to be recorded, though the mass of his evidence is directed to other questions which on the present occasion it is not our intention to discuss. The same remark applies to the evidence of Sir Mordaunt Welles. Like other distinguished lawyers, he is in favour of altering the English law, more especially with regard to the definition of murder contained in our books; but he has come to a reluctant, though deliberate, conclusion that it would be unadvisable at present to abolish capital punishment in England, and still more in India. He is perfectly satisfied, the more he looks into the matter, that in many cases the fear of an ignominious death does act as a restraining motive to protect the objects of a malefactor's violence at the time. The burglar or the ravisher is often tempted to take away life, but this restraining motive acts upon his mind, and he stops short of the commission of the extreme and irreparable crime.

Passing over testimony to the same effect, either oral or written, that has been given by other judicial authorities, we arrive at the evidence of Mr. Fitzjames Stephen. And we pause at this gentleman's evidence not merely because Mr. Stephen is a most profound and philosophical criminal lawyer, but because his practical experience is very much on a par with, and may fairly be set off against, Mr. Denman's. In the last ten years Mr. Stephen has been engaged in nineteen capital cases. His belief is that capital punishment deters people from crime more than any other punishment, and that it does so in two ways. In the first place, its effect is appreciable, and in some cases considerable, in a direct and ordinary manner. When a man is going to commit a crime he does think, "If I do this, I shall be hanged for it." But, besides this, there is a secondary effect of capital punishment. People are aware that murder is punished by an ignominious expulsion from the world, and accustom themselves therefore to consider murder as a very dreadful thing. They associate it with an ignominious death long before they ever had any notion of committing the crime; and when they come to consider the crime, the idea presents itself to their minds with the association. The fact, accordingly, that murder is punishable by death is one reason why people think so badly of murder, though they probably do not analyse their own feelings. This seems to us a sensible and acute observation, and one which is far more logical and satisfactory than Mr. Denman's and Sergeant Parry's vague fancy that criminals think less of the horror of hanging than the jury which is going to hang them thinks of it. And the result of Mr. Stephen's acquaintance with criminal trials is that substantial justice is done. Juries doubtless often acquit the guilty, but they do not often acquit "real" murderers on evidence on which they ought to be convicted. The present definition of the crime is far from adequate or sound; and in cases where the law calls an offence murder, while common sense and popular sentiment call it something else, juries will undoubtedly take the bit between their teeth, and sometimes decide by their moral sense, instead of following the definitions of the law. This is no reason for abolishing the penalty due to real murder, though it is an excellent reason for altering the technical definitions of the law. The tendency to leniency on the part of juries, which, according to Mr. Denman, is a discredit to them, according to Mr.

Stephen is rather to their credit. In the case of "real" murders they are willing enough to convict:-

Mr. Justice O'HAGAN. Is it the result of your experience that juries are not more unwilling to assume the responsibility in a capital case than in any other case?

Mr. STEPHEN. I think that they always weigh the evidence more carefully in proportion to the gravity of the offence in all cases, and not merely in capital cases; and I add that they ought to do so. I would also add that I do not think their standard of proof is at all too high, and that I should be extremely sorry to see that standard of proof lowered. I think that it would be a great evil if people were convicted of murder upon slighter evidence than juries now require.

There is one more remark made by this witness that merits attention. Lord Hobart and other leading abolitionists have laid undue stress on the proportion of committals for murder to convictions, as establishing the inference that the disproportionate number of acquittals is a proof of the inequality of justice. We pointed out in a former article that it was a proof of nothing of the kind. A man who takes a human being's life is by law presumed to be a murderer, until he explains that he is not. Many a man, therefore, is properly committed for murder, who is as properly acquitted when his defence has been heard. Mr. Stephen gives a further reason, which helps to dispose of the statistics of Lord Hobart and Professor Leone Levi:-

It must always be remembered that from the nature of the case, apart from the punishment, the evidence in the case of murder is generally more unsatisfactory than in other cases. In almost every other crime, theft and robbery and rape in particular, and in all the ordinary run of crimes, you have as a rule the injured person as the principal witness. But in murder the injured man cannot give evidence; and, also, in the case of murder, it is generally done with every precaution for secrecy, and therefore the evidence is unsatisfactory. That will account for a larger proportion of acquittals than there would otherwise be.

Briefly to sum up the experience of English judges and English lawyers, the result appears, therefore, to be as follows. It is totally untrue that the innocent are exposed to any real peril by the present system. It is possible, if Mr. Denman is right, that the guilty occasionally escape through the reluctance of jurors to have a hand in taking away life; but Mr. Denman's observation finds no support among those who are more practised, and more likely even than himself to know whether such an observation is correct or not. The mass of English judges, and the best English lawyers, with the exceptions we have named, believe that the punishment of death exercises a real deterring influence, and that no other punishment that can be substituted would exercise any influence nearly as effective. It may, however, be argued that English judges and English lawyers are not likely to know much more about the feelings of the criminal classes, or of would-be murderers, than Mr. Denman, Mr. Parry, and Sir Fitzroy Kelly. Be it so. We turn, therefore, in the last resort, to the overwhelming proof afforded by those who have mixed among the criminal classes for a considerable portion of their lives, and who do know what these classes think and hope and fear; and if abolitionists close their eyes and ears to the result of the inducements of men like Colonel Henderson, Inspectors Tanner and Kitte, and last, though not least, the Ordinary of Newgate, abolitionists must be blind or deaf, or hopelessly at the mercy of their own humane but erratic instincts.

Colonel Henderson is an important, one may almost say an all-important, witness. For sixteen years he has been in the convict service, for twelve years in the colony of Western Australia. During all this time he has been living and moving among the criminal classes, and, in his own words, has had very intimate opportunities of being acquainted with their sentiments on the subject, and with the practical working of the punishment of death. "I think," observes Colonel Henderson, "that I have formed the same opinion as almost every person has who has come into immediate contact with the criminal classes—namely, that the fear of death is the strongest deterrent you can have." In Western Australia the crime of rape, the crime of assault with intent to commit murder, and the crime of burglary with violence, were all punishable with death. At the outset Colonel Henderson found that there was a very strong tendency on the part of the convicts to assault their officers; there were several very bad cases, and it was determined by the Governor in Council to put the law in force on the next occasion. A bad case soon occurred. A warden was cut down with a spade by a convict, who did his best to kill him, and very nearly succeeded. The man was hanged; and "from that time," says Colonel Henderson, "the crime may almost be said to have ceased; we had no more trouble." And it was the same with rape. "The convicts were dispersed all over the country, and the women, and especially the children, were very much at their mercy. It was determined to put the law in force with respect to that crime, and it very nearly ceased. Directly the convicts saw we were in earnest, they ceased to commit that particular crime." One of the most instructive cases with which Colonel Henderson had to deal was the case of the scoundrel Palin. Palin is one of Mr. Denman's instances. He chooses him out as a case of murder going unpunished, because juries were unwilling to convict. We are quite willing to accept Palin as a specimen, but we think he is rather an instance to show that murderers ought to be hanged. And Palin the convict, curiously enough, agrees with us, and not with his counsel, Mr. Deaman. After being acquitted for murder in England, he was sent subsequently to penal servitude in Australia. We here take up his history from the account given of him by Colonel Henderson. If anything can

be proved by argument, it seems to us that Palin proves to demonstration the uselessness of secondary punishments when you have to deal with a ferocious criminal :—

Colonel HENDERSON. Palin was the most atrocious scoundrel that ever was hanged. He broke into a house (in Australia). He had a bludgeon. I do not think that I ever saw such a weapon in my life. It was all studded over with sharp pointed nails. There was a lady sleeping at one end of the house, and her brother-in-law at the other. She woke up in the middle of the night, and found Palin standing by her bedside with his face masked. We never exactly understood whether she was criminally assaulted or not; we did not like to press her upon the point. I believe that it was not the case, but he was restrained by the fear of being hanged. He robbed the house and went away. In the morning they put the natives on his track, and they traced him as nicely as possible to his own house; and he was hanged for burglary with violence, being armed. . . . I saw a letter which he wrote to his friends, in which he acknowledged the justice of his sentence. He said that it was perfectly right that he should be hanged, and that he ought to have been hanged for a murder which he had committed in England five or six years before. That letter I saw myself.

We come next to the testimony of Inspector Tanner. His name is a familiar one, and is worthy of much respect. He knows, from what he has seen, that criminals, generally speaking, are deterred by the fear of capital punishment from committing murder, especially old offenders. Pusey, a burglar, did not disguise (in fact, he said so in the police court) that, if it had not been for "choking" (the slang term used by thieves for being hanged), the housemaid who came to give evidence of the burglary would not have lived to tell the tale. The fear of the gallows on that occasion saved, it would appear, the life, not merely of the housemaid, but of the lady of the house also. Pusey knew that he was sure of penal servitude in any case, but he was anxious not to run the risk of being hanged. And common sense bears out Colonel Henderson and Inspector Tanner. Is there not a real distinction between being imprisoned for life, with all the hope which lasts as long as life lasts, and being hanged? It happens to have been Inspector Tanner's duty to apprehend this very Pusey. He attributes his escape from Pusey's violence entirely to this distinction that Pusey drew between penal servitude for life and hanging. And Inspector Tanner goes on to say that many men who have had penal servitude before "would very deliberately murder me, if the punishment were only penal servitude, rather than be apprehended." Old criminals have a hope of escaping even penal servitude for life, but being hanged is altogether a different affair. There is, according to Mr. Tanner, a vast difference between them. Conversation has been overheard "from one offender to another, where they have been in the act—'Do not choke him,' 'Do not murder him,' 'Do not do this,' and 'Do not do that,' from the very fear of being hanged."

Inspector Kittle's evidence is to the same effect. Like Inspector Tanner's, it deserves to be reprinted in letters of gold, for the benefit of the Abolition Society and of Sir Fitzroy Kelly. His observations lead him to the conclusion that having the doom of death hanging over them if they commit murder has a deterring effect on the lower classes. "I have heard them say over and over again that they would rather be transported three or four times over than they would be hung, that they did not mind for the jug (the gaol), but that they had a great horror of being scragged." From conversations which Inspector Kittle has had with different men in the police, he believes that the sentence of death has a strong deterring influence on criminals in preventing the final act of murder. Other punishments they treat lightly, but "they have a great horror of being executed." "I have frequently heard it said that, 'if it was not for swinging for you I would murder you.'" "I have frequently heard that, both in crowds and on other occasions. I believe that the persons who used these expressions were in the heat of passion, and that the only thing that restrained them was the fear of the punishment that would follow." And Inspector Kittle affirms, further, "that the criminals who have seen the inside of a gaol, and know the working of it, have not anything like such a horror of confinement as they have of the final doom." "I firmly believe," continues the Inspector, "that if a desperate character knew that his punishment was only penal servitude for life, he would not hesitate to commit murder to liberate himself from the custody of the policeman who had him in charge, and I know that this is the feeling of the police generally."

Against practical evidence like this what have the abolitionists to say? That Mr. Denman and Serjeant Parry opine that would-be murderers do not take into their calculation the chances of being hung. With the utmost respect for Mr. Denman and Serjeant Parry, who guess and speculate, we beg leave to point to the evidence of Messrs. Tanner and Kittle, who know. If further corroboration were needed, we would point to the clear and cogent evidence of the Rev. John Davis, Ordinary for Newgate. In Mr. Davis's opinion, "it is impossible to avoid capital executions." "It would be dangerous to the men who have to watch over criminals under penal servitude for life, if the punishment of death for murder were to be abolished." And Mr. Davis, like all other competent authorities, may be said to give the *coup de grace* to Sir Fitzroy Kelly. "I never knew," says Mr. Davis, "a man under sentence of death who resisted the justice of the punishment." As to the deterrent influence of the penalty Mr. Davis is clear and precise :—

I remember a man of the name of Hagler, who was executed for murdering his wife. He all along thought that he should escape, and he told me, just before he died, that if he had known he would be executed for it, he should not have murdered her.

We leave Sir Fitzroy and Mr. Denman and Serjeant Parry in

company with Inspectors Tanner and Kittle, and the Ordinary of Newgate. The public is perfectly competent to decide which of these persons is most likely to form a correct estimate of the effect of the punishment of death. It is fair to say that the balance of testimony in the Blue-book seems to us to be decidedly in favour of the substitution of private for public executions. Against this amendment we have nothing to urge. But if evidence is worth anything, and if moral proof is worth anything, it is beyond all doubt established by the Blue-book before us that capital punishment is necessary for the safety of English society.

THE POOR *versus* THE RAILWAYS.

MOST tyrannies in England (and there are plenty to be found by diligent search) establish themselves in a fashion peculiar to this country. The cleverest *coup d'état*, whether on a large or a small scale, is doomed to certain failure; and Englishmen are never so much asleep to their rights as to be robbed, by surprise, of the most insignificant of their liberties. But there are more insidious ways of effecting the same object; and under the shelter of some good popular cry—if it be a cry founded on our love of freedom, so much the better—it is the easiest thing in the world to sow the seed of some overshadowing tyranny which is acquiesced in, as it spreads its roots and its branches, until at last escape seems almost hopeless. Perhaps more than any other delusion, "Local Self-Government" has fostered a whole colony of thriving tyrannies. A kindred idea, that huge monopolies should be left to do as they please in the interest of what is humorously called private enterprise, has given us hundreds of uncompromising masters. Water Companies and Gas Companies make us drink and burn whatever stuff they choose to supply, and are deaf to any appeal against extravagant charges which does not go the length of threatening the formation of a rival monopoly. But, of all the tyrants who grind us down for the sake of freedom, there are none like Railway Companies; and what makes the prospect the more dismal is, that they have learned to act as a compact phalanx, and have already almost established a dominant influence within the walls of Parliament. A very few years will, at the present rate of progress, give an absolute majority in the House to the representatives, nominees, friends, and followers of the great Railway Interest. Many Directors may be good men of business, and some few may be large-minded enough to look upon their fellow-subjects as something more than mere elements of traffic; but even if Directors had all the virtues which they occasionally lack, we would seriously ask the community at large whether, upon the whole, it is desirable that the entire power of the country should be wielded by a single class, and especially whether the limitations of railway authority should be determined solely by the will of the Railway Companies. If not, it is not a day too soon—some of the railway magnates may perhaps hope that it will even now prove too late—to offer some little resistance to the encroachments of the Companies before their power becomes too well consolidated to admit of attack.

It is easy to understand why Ministers and expectant Ministers should deal tenderly with a compact and growing party which already commands, on certain subjects, an available majority in any but a very full House; and it is fortunate that independent members are not restrained by similar prudential motives. Probably Mr. Hughes, in challenging the opposition of the Railway Interest, scarcely knew the strength of the antagonists he provoked. With the blind courage of a recruit, he has opened his Parliamentary career with an assault which must either end in ignominious failure, or lead to more than one hard-fought struggle. His proposition that some sort of compensation should be given to the poor no less than to the rich, when dispossessed by Railway Companies, is so obviously right that it is not surprising that it was kindly received by the House. But if he imagines that a victory is to be gained without outvoting a sturdy silent band, who are deaf to all voices but those of Railway Directors, he will probably add to his experience as soon as he finds an opportunity to bring on his threatened motion. So long as the attack was confined to isolated Bills, the mutual antagonism of rival Companies was all in its favour, and the project for turning some thirty acres of Hampstead Heath into a smoky railway gave way after a wonderfully slight resistance. The battle will assume very different dimensions whenever a general resolution to limit the excessive powers of all future Railway Companies is brought under consideration. The form of railway oppression against which Mr. Hughes has protested is by no means the only arbitrary authority which calls for some legislative remedy; but the choice of the field of battle leaves the Railway Interest without the possibility of an argument in defence. Hundreds of houses are demolished, and thousands of workmen sent adrift to wander far from their work, or else to compete for accommodation in districts already crowded to suffocation. And for being thus turned out of house and home a douceur of a week's rent is all that is ordinarily given by way of compensation. The pretext for this harsh treatment of course is, that a man who is a mere weekly or monthly tenant is at any moment liable to be turned out by his landlord, and that expulsion by a Railway Company is no greater hardship. But this is simply untrue, for—to say nothing of the fact that a respectable tenant who pays his rent never is turned out—there is all the difference in the world between determining a tenancy and destroying a house. So long as the supply of lodgings is not diminished, a man who loses one

can generally find another at the rent which custom, or rather the law of supply and demand, has established. But when a large proportion of the dwellings of a district are destroyed, the supply no longer exists, and those who are driven forth are compelled to live in less convenient localities, and in many cases also to pay an increased rent. No one of course will contend that, where the public need of a railway is shown, the poor man's house is to be respected while the rich man's mansion is pulled down without appeal. But two things may very fairly be said—one, that the poor also should be compensated to the full extent of the damage inflicted; and the other, that any demolition which narrows the area available for the dwellings of labourers should be balanced by the erection, in some contiguous or otherwise accessible place, of buildings affording equivalent accommodation. And this is not really so difficult as it may seem. The plan of building lodging-houses in large blocks, in place of the low tenements in which most artisans and labourers now live, affords an almost unlimited opportunity of economising space, while the railway itself might be made to neutralise the evil it produced. If the fact were sufficiently borne in mind that a heavy train may be worked at a cost of not more than two or three shillings per mile, including all allowances for wear and tear and establishment expenses, it would be more generally known than it is that a Railway Company might carry a workman from his lodgings to his work some three or four miles distant at a price of less than a penny, and this not only without loss, but with a large margin of profit. Facts of this complexion have been sedulously concealed, and will no doubt be stoutly denied, until the public shall have been fully enlightened by the Report of the Commission now sitting on the subject. But no one can doubt the justice of requiring Railway Companies to supply the deficiency of house-room which they cause, by building new lodging-houses either in the immediate neighbourhood, or adjoining some not distant station, and, in the latter case, to carry workmen at a price which would not too heavily add to their weekly rent.

Some such provisions as we have indicated would meet the case of the labourer, which the member for Lambeth has brought forward; but the inadequacy of the existing law is by no means confined to this particular case. The truth is, that the Lands Clauses Act, by which railway compensation is regulated, is not unjust to owners and lessees of rural land. But the statute was framed at a time when such concerns as the London, Chatham, and Dover had not entered into the imagination of railway projectors. Except in very rare cases, and to a very limited extent, no one had ever proposed to drive a railway through a populous town district, and, accordingly, it is not surprising that those who drew the Act paid very little regard to interests which it was never supposed that Railway Companies would materially affect. The scheme of this Act, now twenty-one years old, is to give the tolerably fair protection of arbitration, or a trial by jury, to all persons having a freehold or leasehold interest; but this privilege was refused to tenants from year to year, and all others having a more limited interest. In such cases the Railway Company may bring the sufferer before a Metropolitan magistrate to have the damage assessed in a summary fashion, and the working of this provision is, that tenants from year to year rarely get more than a quarter's rent as compensation for an expulsion, which may destroy the good-will of a flourishing trade. The wrong done in this way to numbers of shopkeepers and traders is immense, and no doubt would never have been permitted if the statute had been passed after Railway Companies had acquired their modern taste for the demolition of houses and streets. Another very serious defect of the law has arisen from the same circumstance. A railway carried through the fields can scarcely (if properly worked) do any appreciable damage beyond that which is inflicted by the construction of the line; and the Act accordingly provides compensation for this last kind of damage only, and none whatever for the nuisance and injury which may be caused by the running of the trains. There are now houses in London in course of being shaken down by the running of the trains of the Metropolitan railways, and many more which are rendered comparatively uninhabitable by effluvia and other annoyances from a neighbouring station. Even if the rent of a house were from such causes reduced to one half, and its term of probable existence to a quarter of their former measure, the owner would not be entitled to a farthing of compensation from a Company which acquires its powers solely on the supposed principle of paying full compensation for every private injury.

The cases we have mentioned do not nearly exhaust the list of uncompensated injuries which Railway Companies are allowed to inflict. They alone are allowed the privilege of creating a nuisance without fear of injunction or damages. It is a privilege which they have gained by the insufficiency of the law to meet the altered circumstances of the present day, and it seems not unreasonable to ask that a protective statute which we have outgrown should be enlarged to fit our actual dimensions. As we have said, it will be very difficult for any effectual reform to be carried by the efforts of independent members; and the subject is eminently one on which it is the duty of the Government to take the initiative. There is no hope, however, of that; but the American hunter's appeal to Providence may not be thought unreasonable when addressed to the Ministry. If they won't help the people against the Railway Companies, let them at least stand neutral, and take care that an independent attempt to do their work for them shall not be defeated by the railway whip.

IRISH UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

THE points of resemblance between the late and the present Sir Robert Peel are neither numerous nor striking, but the latter does his utmost to atone for any deficiency in this respect by his restless and enthusiastic advocacy of the Irish Queen's Colleges. So far, therefore, he was the person to whom it naturally fell to cross-examine Mr. Gladstone on Tuesday, though in connection with any other subject it might possibly have occurred, even to Sir Robert Peel, that such an office can be undertaken with only doubtful grace by an ex-member of an existing Government. In the interest, however, of secular education, a consideration for petty proprieties is obviously out of place, and the House of Commons was consequently treated to the singular spectacle of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland assuming an entire ignorance of a negotiation the greater part of which had been conducted during the time that he was himself in office. But if the part played by Sir Robert Peel on Tuesday was a peculiar one, how shall we fully characterize that undertaken, on the same occasion, by another Minister out of place? "He that lacks time to mourn lacks time to mend," and Mr. Lowe seems about to exhibit a happy illustration of the truth of the converse proposition. He has profited by the additional opportunities for self-examination afforded by additional leisure, and the earnest of his repentance is an entire change of theory as to the function of Parliament in educational administration. The idea of the Executive making any move in such a matter without the previous concurrence of the House of Commons is now abhorrent to him. He is not content with the assurance that any change in the constitution of the Queen's University will be "brought to the knowledge" of Parliament. "Do I understand," he asks, amid Opposition cheers, "that the change will take place without this House having an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it?" We can well understand that his experience at the Education Office may have engendered a well-founded distrust of the efficacy of Parliamentary interference after a regulation is issued, but it is a little startling to find such avowed scepticism on the part of the author and finisher of the Revised Code.

The attention of Irishmen seems to have been divided for some months back, in pretty equal proportions, between Fenianism and the alleged design of the Government to subvert united education. When Sir George Grey announced, at the end of last Session, that the Cabinet was willing to make certain alterations which would enable Irish Roman Catholics to obtain a University degree in their own country without doing any violence to their conscientious scruples, it certainly did not seem that any principle of liberty was attacked by so very moderate a concession. And we are disposed to think that the opposition to the change would never have attained its present proportions if it had not been for the circulation of a report that the "Catholic University" was to receive a State endowment of £25,000*l.* a year. We believe that a more gratuitous invention was never hazarded, but its originators certainly deserve the praise of having exactly adapted their fiction to the requirements of the public taste. The Protestants of Ireland saw in the rumour an impending repetition of the Maynooth Grant, while the advocates of the voluntary system dreaded an endowment of the Roman Catholic Church by a side wind; and thus two powerful interests were at once enlisted in support of the opposition naturally offered by the existing Queen's Colleges to a change which tended to depreciate their position in Ireland. When the report had done its work it was quietly dropped, but the agitation which it had originally aroused was not laid to rest with it. The general rule, that when the cause ceases the effect ceases, rarely applies to the case of a false rumour invented with a purpose. And yet the Government proposition hardly seems to call for any great display of enthusiasm on either side. It is, so far as is known, simply to affiliate the existing "Catholic University" as an additional college to the Queen's University, and to make such alterations in the governing body of the central institution as will give the newly introduced element its just weight in University administration. As things stand at present, there are two systems of the higher education working side by side in Ireland—the denominational and the secular. The latter is supported by State grants, and has a State recognition secured to it by the incorporation of the Queen's University. The former is not supported by State grants, but, as far as Protestants are concerned, it has the advantage of State recognition by the incorporation of Trinity College. As regards Roman Catholics, the denominational system gets neither aid nor recognition. It maintains a University by voluntary subscriptions, but in the absence of a charter, the degrees conferred there are destitute of any legal value. Thus, to the Irish Roman Catholic, the State says in effect:—"If you want a University education, and its natural complement a University degree, you may either go to the Queen's Colleges, which are of no religion, or to Trinity College, which is Protestant. If, instead of being content with this, you insist upon having a denominational education conducted under the auspices of your own religion, we are sorry for you; and though we cannot prevent your getting the education, since you pay for it out of your own pocket, we will take very good care that it shall be as little use to you as possible when you have got it. No matter what its intellectual quality may be, it shall not be ticketed with the Government mark." This is what many Irish

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Liberals, by a characteristic use of the national figure of speech, call maintaining freedom of education.

The principal arguments which are brought forward against the Government proposal are, that the Queen's University as at present constituted gives all that is required by Roman Catholics; that if they want more than this they can apply to the University of London; and that the State is bound to promote secular in preference to denominational education, as being a better thing in itself. In support of the first of these positions very elaborate calculations have been entered into with the view of ascertaining the exact position of the Queen's Colleges in reference to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. We are bound to say that on this part of the case the opponents of the Government seem to have the best of the argument. They have established that the proportion of Roman Catholics among the lay students is considerably larger than was estimated by The O'Donoghue last Session, and that the numbers attending the Colleges have steadily increased since their foundation. But we are unable to see that statistics of this sort bear very materially upon the question at issue. Where the whole body of the Roman Catholic clergy are opposed to the Queen's Colleges, and where a rival institution has been set on foot at an expense of 40,000*l.*, and kept alive at an annual outlay of 8,000*l.*, both these sums being raised by voluntary subscription, it is useless, as it seems to us, to deny that there is a large portion of the Irish Roman Catholic body which, from scruples—conscientious even if mistaken—does not avail itself of the secular education provided by the State. Well, then, it is answered, they can go through what course of study they please either at their so-called University in Dublin or at their own houses, and then go up for their degree to the peripatetic examiners sent out from Burlington House; and in recommendation of this alternative great stress is laid upon the fact that the University of London did actually hold a matriculation examination last year in the town of Carlow. We confess that the *naïveté* of this argument is so remarkable as to make it difficult to deal with it seriously. The Government is called upon to maintain, at considerable expense, a system of University education in the most genuinely Roman Catholic country of Europe, from the benefits of which most strict Roman Catholics are *ipso facto* excluded. It is further asked to refuse to recognise any degrees but those obtained under this system, and then, when the sufferers remonstrate, it is coolly advised to tell them they may get a degree from an English University which is organized on a less exclusive footing. The third argument rests upon a wholly false conception of the duty of the State. It is doubtless highly desirable that the people of any country should receive as good an education as their position and circumstances will allow, and the Government is of course quite justified in requiring that an educational body to which it issues a charter of incorporation shall have given evidence of its attainment of a certain intellectual standard. But it by no means follows that the State has any right to make this amount of sanction dependent upon the acceptance of a particular educational theory, or that, if it sees fit to start an institution of its own, it is thereupon to indirectly proscribe every other. Even Mr. J. S. Mill, who can hardly be considered by any one as an over-ardent denominationalist, has laid down that "an education established and controlled by the State should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence." If the State thinks a secular system of education a good thing, it may be justified in setting one up, but it has no business whatever to discourage a denominational system existing along side of it, by surrounding its own offspring with exceptional and exclusive privileges.

It may be said, perhaps, that this reasoning points rather to the incorporation of a distinct Roman Catholic University than to any amalgamation of it with the institution supported by the State. And it must be remembered that the former has always been the requisition put forward by the Irish Roman Catholics. The proposition of Sir George Grey was a compromise, designed, we imagine, to disarm the opposition of the friends of the Queen's Colleges. Curiously enough, however, so far from having any effect of the kind, it has been received with greater marks of dislike than the original demand. Even Professor Cairnes, the staunchest opponent of the Government scheme, now writes that, "on the assumption that the demand for a charter for 'The Catholic University' means simply a demand, on the part of persons holding certain peculiar views, to be placed on an equality, as regards State recognition, with the rest of the community, our principles would certainly lead us to the conclusion that such a claim ought to be conceded." Immediately afterwards, however, finding this conclusion an inconvenient one, he unharasses his principles, and declines to be led by them any longer. His ground for so doing is his belief that a separate Roman Catholic University would tend to the consolidation of Ultramontane influence in Ireland. We should regret this result as deeply as Professor Cairnes, but we are not, like him, prepared to commit an injustice in order to escape from it. And we suspect, further, that nothing helps Ultramontanism in Ireland so much as the possession of any fair ground of complaint against a Protestant Government. Nor, indeed, after the experience we have had of Fenianism, are we at all convinced of the superiority—at any rate, in a political point of view—of a theologically emancipated to a theologically enslaved Irishman. The least consistent perhaps of the objections to the Government

compromise is that which, accepting the scheme of affiliation, protests against the admission to the Senate of a necessary minimum of Roman Catholic members. But a change involving the substitution of a University which is united in the sense of recognising all religions, for a University which is only united in the sense of recognising no religion, necessarily involves the presence of a denominational element in the governing body. It would be absurd, indeed, to propose that the examiners should be of any particular creed, because all that is wanted here is the possession of specific knowledge in their several departments. But in the composition of the body which appoints the examiners something more is needed. If the Queen's University is to work well on its new basis, it must command the confidence both of its affiliated colleges and of the country at large; and we do not see how this end is to be secured without the presence in the Senate of a certain proportion of Roman Catholics. If the friends of the existing system find this concession too much for them, we recommend them to make common cause with the Roman Catholic hierarchy in a recurrence to the original demand of a separate Charter of Incorporation for the titular "Catholic University."

THE PASTON LETTERS.

NESTING is not an amusement confined to boyhood. There is, however, this important distinction, that whereas boys go in pursuit of the nests of birds, their seniors engage themselves in discovering the nests of mares. A somewhat startling *find* of this nature was made last September by a gentleman of high and merited repute as a scholar and a man of letters, Mr. Herman Merivale; and was announced in the columns of a periodical of which the character could not but add weight, if weight were wanted, to Mr. Merivale's inquiry, "Are the 'Paston Letters' authentic?" And weight was wanted. It seemed at first sight incredible that serious doubt could be cast on the authenticity of letters which, more than any other historical documents, would appear to defy the attacks of scepticism. Yet it was quite evident that no mere *jeu d'esprit* was intended. Clearly, Mr. Merivale meant what he said, though it was by no means easy to make out what he meant to say. He carried on his attack with a perpetual change of front. No specific charge was advanced on specific grounds. At one time we are told the letters are "partly genuine" (p. 131), at another we seem warranted in inferring that Mr. Merivale looks upon them as an entire romance (p. 133). Then the object of attack was either changed, or multiplied, or both, so that in every way it seemed extremely difficult to bring forward arguments to satisfy that large class of readers who would skim through Mr. Merivale's article, give ready credence to his confessedly ingenious criticism, and never trouble themselves to read the actual letters which had been thus boldly impugned. The paleographers at the Office of Records, the antiquaries at Somerset House, were up in arms and rushed to the rescue. Mr. James Gairdner published, in a subsequent number of the *Fortnightly Review*, an article to which, at the time of its publication, no one but Mr. Merivale could have taken exception, and with which he himself would now, we presume, cordially agree. The Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries retained for the defence the services of Mr. John Bruce—he could not well have chosen a better man—and announcements found their way into the newspapers that a grand discussion on the authenticity of the Paston Letters would take place at the Society's apartments. Take place it accordingly did on the 30th of November; but meanwhile an event had occurred which, while it furnished a complete defence against Mr. Merivale's assault, deprived the meeting of certain kind of zest and piquancy which it might otherwise have had.

Our readers are doubtless aware that Sir John Fenn did not himself carry through the press the fifth volume of the *Paston Letters*. This task was executed by his relative, and literary representative, the late Mr. Serjeant Frere, who stated in the preface to his edition of vol. v. that he had been unable to discover the original manuscript of that volume, which he had printed from transcripts almost entirely in the handwriting of Mr. Dalton, a well-known and highly-respected solicitor at Bury St. Edmund's, who, when a very young man, had assisted Sir John Fenn in preparing the *Paston Letters* for the press. The loss of the original manuscript of the fifth volume was no doubt singular enough, for Sir John Fenn was a man of almost unexampled method in the arrangement of his papers; but the singularity was rendered ever so much greater by the fortuitous concurrence of the disappearance (1) of the manuscripts of vols. i. and ii. and (2) of those of vols. iii. and iv. It is to this admittedly extraordinary concurrence of the loss, in three different ways, of three different sets of manuscript of the same work, that we believe the public is indebted for Mr. Merivale's article in the *Fortnightly Review*. When Sir John Fenn published the first two volumes of the *Paston Letters*, and presented a copy of those volumes to the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, he accompanied the donation by a letter to the President, dated January 1787, in which he says, "If it be agreeable to the Society, the original letters shall be left for one month in their Library, for the inspection of such gentlemen whose curiosity may be excited to examine them." The minute-books of the Society record that, on the 1st of February in that same year, the Society "expressed their satisfaction in having the originals deposited in their library for the purpose mentioned in the letter of their worthy member." And if further proof were wanted that the

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Letters were so deposited, it is supplied by the advertisement issued on the 23rd of March, 1787, in a new edition of these volumes, in which the editor states, "It may not be improper to mention that the original Manuscript Letters were, immediately after the publication of the first edition, deposited for some time in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries for the general inspection and examination of the members of that and of the Royal Society." It was while these manuscripts of these two volumes were in the Library of the Society that King George III. expressed a wish to inspect and examine them. The editor met the wish more than half-way by asking the King to accept them, if they were thought worthy of a place in the Royal Collection. The result of this offer is stated in the following paragraph from the *Morning Chronicle* of the 24th of May, 1787 :—

Yesterday John Fenn, Esq., attended the levee at St. James's, and had the honour of presenting to His Majesty (*bound in three volumes*) the Original Letters of which he had before presented a printed copy, when His Majesty, as a mark of his gracious acceptance, was pleased to confer on him the honour of Knighthood.

That the manuscripts "*bound in three volumes*" here mentioned were the manuscripts of vols. i. and ii., and of those only, cannot, we think, be doubted. What has become of them is at present a mystery, but a mystery which must soon be solved by the officers of Her Majesty's Household would only take the trouble to make a proper search. We have reason to know that the late Prince Consort designed to prosecute that search in a quarter which he believed might probably yield a favourable result; but this design was arrested by death, and we cannot feel quite so sanguine as to the result of researches made by subordinates and officials who are not personally interested, as he was, in the question at issue, and who indeed would probably think the whole thing a great bore, and conduct the inquiry in a most perfunctory manner. At the same time it is simply disgraceful that manuscripts which from their bound state could not well have been used for waste paper to light the fire, or to curl the hair of a lady-in-waiting, should for so long a time have escaped observation and defied research. We trust that the Royal Household will bestir itself in the matter. Perhaps if the powers given to Mr. Woodward, the Queen's Librarian, were co-extensive with his known zeal, energy, and intelligence, we should not have long to wait for the appearance of the missing volumes. As the matter stands, small encouragement is given to present objects of value to the Royal Collection.

But how about the manuscripts of volumes iii. and iv.? For our own part we strongly suspect that they will ultimately turn up in the possession of the gentleman to whose courtesy and liberality the Society of Antiquaries was indebted for the very interesting exhibition of Paston Papers on the 30th of November. And this brings us to the event to which we have already referred. After Mr. Gairdner had published his reply in the *Fortnightly Review*, and while Mr. Bruce was preparing his answer to Mr. Merivale, a paragraph found its way into a weekly newspaper to the effect that Mr. Philip Frere of Dungate, Cambridgeshire, had discovered among some unedited Paston Letters the entire manuscript of the fifth volume, which Mr. Philip Frere's father, the late Serjeant, had, as we have seen, declared himself unable to find. Sir John Fenn, we believe, made Serjeant Frere his literary heir, and we see nothing improbable in the surmise that two other volumes of Paston manuscripts may one day turn up in a house where one volume, most urgently needed at the time of its publication, has for many years, and so unaccountably, escaped detection.

Such are the facts respecting the manuscripts of these Letters. Those of the first and second volumes were given (*bound in three volumes*) to George III.; those of vols. iii. and iv. were not so given, and, like the first two, are still missing; those of the fifth volume are now in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, under the inspection of a Committee charged by the Council to examine and report upon them.

We now return for a moment to the 30th of November, and to the apartments of the Society. A crowded meeting was in attendance. Earl Stanhope occupied the chair. Mr. Herman Merivale was present, by invitation, and the table was covered with glass cases containing the "pièces de conviction" which the Secretary had brought from Dungate. The meeting was in every respect a great success, and we offer to the Society our hearty congratulations on its legitimate triumph. It was only right and fitting that the fame of Sir John Fenn, one of the most honoured and most honourable of the Society's Fellows in the olden time, should be vindicated by its agency and beneath its roof. Mr. Bruce was of course the protagonist of the occasion, the accredited champion of the Paston Letters, and he did his work to perfection. With a lucidity doubly valuable in a statement delivered orally, he placed before the audience an account of the various members of the Paston family—a subject of much intricacy by reason of the recurrence in that family of several members of the same name and surname. He then traced with care the history of the manuscripts, and described with minuteness the way in which Fenn had performed his duties as editor and had invited the closest scrutiny on the performance. He answered one by one all the allegations of Mr. Merivale which Mr. Gairdner had left unanswered, and gave additional corroboration to what Mr. Gairdner had advanced. Had Mr. Merivale objected to certain words and expressions as too modern to belong to the fifteenth century? Mr. Bruce, in reply, was able to point on the table to the very expressions so impugned—*e.g.* "I am excusable both to God and you," and "the dreadfull man."

Had Mr. Merivale objected to the use of playing-cards "in a country manor-house" as early as 1484? Mr. Bruce was armed with extracts from the Rolls of Parliament as early as 1461, which implied the general use of playing cards. Had Mr. Merivale asserted, on a review of the history of the MSS., "that no legal claim could possibly be rested on documents which had passed through so many hands and been subject to the chance of so many tamperings"? Mr. Bruce was surely justified in replying, that in respect of any "legal claim," the Paston Letters were exactly in the same position as all our other historical MSS. in the British Museum or the Bodleian Library, and as the State Papers in the Record Office. It would be a novel doctrine to maintain that an editor of such papers is to be liable to suspicion because he cannot give such a history of them as would establish a legal claim. At every point, in short, Mr. Bruce was ready with apt and cogent replies—so cogent that, when he had concluded his paper, Mr. Herman Merivale, with honourable and rare candour, admitted his inability to hold out any longer against what he had both seen and heard. "Whether his ingenuity had been misplaced or not in raising doubts about the Paston Letters, there could be no question that it would be very misplaced ingenuity, in the present state of things, to argue upon them or to continue them." It is not always given to men to extricate themselves from a position of some little discomfiture with so much grace and dignity as Mr. Merivale has done on this occasion.

The Letters exhibited by Mr. Philip Frere comprise not only the entire manuscript of the fifth volume, but about 270 other unedited letters of an interest scarcely inferior to that of the published volumes. If, and when, the manuscripts of the earlier volumes are discovered, we earnestly hope that the Master of the Rolls will be induced to authorize the publication of the entire series in chronological order. For the history of the times to which they refer, for the manners they describe, for the language they illustrate, we cannot conceive any scheme which would yield more precious fruits. Since Fenn's day a vast amount of light has been thrown upon points which he of necessity left obscure; and the mode in which he edited the Letters—uncertain as he was whether he would meet with encouragement to prosecute the undertaking—would now give way to a more exact and more uniform plan. Then, again, there are not only these unedited Letters, but portions of the edited Letters—if we may judge from this fifth volume, and from Fenn's own statements—which Fenn omitted from his publication as being too much of a private character, but which would in these days be regarded as by far the most interesting portion of the collection. On other grounds a new edition would be most desirable. Fenn, as our readers are aware, published the original text and spelling of the Letters alongside a modern version. Now, if we compare the manuscript of the fifth volume with the volume itself, we believe it will be found that the modern version has been correctly made from the original manuscript, while the printed transcript of that original manuscript is in many respects very inaccurate. In this particular volume we know that the modern version was made by Fenn; and the transcript, as printed, in nearly every case, by Mr. Dalton. This circumstance, if it holds good with the earlier volumes, should caution us not to lay on Sir John Fenn's shoulders any errors which may turn up in the readings of the original manuscripts. At any rate, so far as the collation has gone, we believe we are not misinformed when we state that although some inaccuracies have been discovered—inaccuracies due, as we have just observed, to Mr. Dalton's errors of transcript, inaccuracies due to the inability of printers in those days to express in type peculiar abbreviations, inaccuracies arising from what was then an imperfect knowledge of the forms and history of the language—though all these may to some extent impair the credit of Sir John Fenn as an accomplished and exact editor, not the faintest shadow of a suspicion has been thrown, by the most rigid scrutiny, on his honesty as an historical inquirer, or his integrity as an upright English gentleman. We feel that we are doing no more than justice to Mr. Herman Merivale when we state our conviction that no one will be better pleased than himself if this should be the ultimate verdict of the Committee of which he is himself a member.

THE LATE CAPTAIN WHITE.

THE memoirs of the late Captain White which have appeared in the various sporting newspapers exhibit a type of English character which deserves attentive examination. The Captain seems to have possessed in large measure all the mental and bodily qualifications which go to make up a first-rate fox-hunter, and the wonder is that one so gifted should have been content with such fame as is to be won in Leicestershire. Captain White was born in 1790, and was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He graduated in 1811, and went to Lincoln, where "he saw all that splendid sport which the Squire showed during his mastership," and in 1815 he moved to Melton. It is no reproach to the writers who supply us with the facts of Captain White's career that they write as if the greatest events which the world witnessed from 1811 to 1815 were transacted in the hunting-fields of England. The proverb that "there is as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it" is remarkably illustrated by the Captain's history; for he was made of the very same material as the best officers of the army which served in Spain, and if, instead of taking to hunting "as the real business of life," he had taken

to fighting, he must needs have attained, if he had been fortunate, to high military distinction. The qualities which the hunting-field calls forth are much the same as are required in war, and its dangers, to those who ride as Captain White rode, are considerable. If coats and claret-bins cannot be carried on a campaign, it is to be noted, on the other side of the account, that stars and crosses are not to be won at Melton. To such a temper as Captain White's there would seem no exaggeration in Hotspur's well-known speech, and yet he preferred to "pluck bright honour" among the bullfinches of the shires rather than in the battles and sieges for which it is likely that the period of his early manhood will hereafter be principally remembered. Of the dangers of the hunting-field the Captain had his full share, and "there was scarcely a bone in his body that had not been broken."

If it be conceded that the hunting-field and the race-course furnish together the noblest opportunities for action, it follows that the wearers of "silk and scarlet" ought to share their honours with the horses which assist in their exploits. Accordingly, when we read that four years ago a report was spread in sporting circles that "Kettledrum was dying and Captain White was dead," we feel that a memoir of the Master of Hounds, written on his actual death, will not be less appropriate to the occasion though the author of it may believe that the death of a winner of the Derby would be equally a national calamity. The character of Captain White was singularly complete. He might have compared with one of Homer's heroes in horse management, with another in power of voice, and with a third perhaps in astuteness. It may have occurred to readers of Homer that Ulysses was qualified to shine at Tattersall's and on the Turf, and the opportunities which fortune denied to Ulysses she granted to Captain White. The modern hero could sell a horse as well as ride him, and his admirers tell, with peculiar relish, the story of an auction at the old Club at Melton. Mistakes naturally arise where horses are of the same colour and style. The Quorn had had a very fast forty minutes, and the Captain had been in the front rank as usual with one of his two dark chestnuts, and had come a tremendous cropper into a green lane. "Luckily his groom was close at hand with the other, and as not a soul knew of the change it was sold for 400 guineas at night." As Master of the Cheshire Hounds, the Captain's power of voice and also of expression made him terrible to the gentlemen from Manchester and Liverpool, who would have disregarded more gentle admonition. The Poet Laureate of the Hunt wrote:—

The dogs looked fine as satin, and himself looked hard as nails;
And he gave the swells a caution not to ride upon their tails.

And an effective writer of sporting prose tells us that when Captain White did let out at the commercial gentlemen it was generally with something that stuck, "and no one could wonder that some of them, and a drysalter especially, stood in mortal terror of his wondrous volume of voice and his merciless shafts." In "silk," as a gentleman jockey, he was quite as famous as in "scarlet." At a time when cockfighting was openly and eagerly pursued at Newmarket and all other resorts of racing men, Captain White was one of the highest authorities upon all matters connected with this sport, and he was also quite at home at the ringside in a prize-fight. As he said himself, there was no fun he had not enjoyed except going up in a balloon. During the great days at Melton, of which Nimrod wrote in the *Quarterly*, he was known as Mr. John White, and it was in later years that it pleased him to derive the style of "captain" from some commission in militia or yeomanry which he had at some time held.

In recent times Captain White has been remarkable on the Turf, not so much for the running of his own as of his friends' horses. Under his management Mr. Naylor's stable won the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby with Macaroni, and the Oaks with Feu de Joie. The winter favourite for the Derby had been Lord Clifden, and Macaroni was little thought of by the public until after he had won the Guineas. To win the Derby by a head, after having enjoyed during several months the opportunity of "getting on" at remunerative prices, was an exploit on which the shade of Ulysses would be apt to congratulate the shade of Captain White when they met in the Elysian fields. Our hero afterwards became the adviser of Lord Stamford in his Turf transactions, and many persons who never heard the name before will remember that, when Cambuscan was sold at a memorable auction, the purchaser was Captain White. Cambuscan ran for the Derby in the pink and black of his new owner, and if we could feel sure that Captain White's enormous experience of horses was committed to the opinion that this horse would win the Derby, we should be more strongly impressed than ever with a conviction of the uncertainty of the Turf. However, Cambuscan was a good horse, but his lot fell in a year which was unusually prolific in good horses. The colours of Captain White were again seen last year on Joker, a horse which critics took the liberty to call wretched.

At the age of seventy-five, Captain White preserved in a remarkable degree the activity and elasticity of mind and body which he had displayed in earlier years. He walked a little lame, from one of his numerous falls in hunting, but otherwise he moved and looked like a man of fifty. The ludicrous incident of an indisposition produced by eating an unwholesome mutton-pie acquired a

melancholy character when the indisposition developed into a disease which must necessarily prove fatal. The reputation of a man depends, not on how death comes to him, but on how he meets it; but nevertheless one does not feel exactly disposed to exclaim, after reading all the memoirs which have been written of Captain White, "When I have lived such a life, Heaven grant me such a death." This man, whether or not he was a hero, was undoubtedly a piece of the stuff out of which heroes have been made in other times. In Homer's age he might have earned the titles of *ιπποκαμπος*, and *βοιηρ αγαθος*, and *πολυμητρος*. In this age, making such use as he did of his opportunities, he has caused the sporting newspapers to say of him that "he leaves behind him a widow, a daughter, and two sons, besides an undying reputation as a gentleman jockey and foxhunter." If this sort of glory is a recompense for broken bones, Captain White's career may be called successful; for certainly he earned fame fairly, and lived long enough to enjoy it thoroughly. But probably the dangers which he braved, the courage and conduct which he showed, and the fortune which attended him, would have sufficed, under other circumstances, to win for him an "undying reputation" in that profession of arms to which he only in name belonged.

THE WINTER EXHIBITION.

THE collection this winter, at 120 Pall Mall, is not one of remarkable interest. Following the alphabetical arrangement of the catalogue, we may first mention a little picture by Mr. Beavis, "Fort Royal, St. Malo—Horses carting Timber from the Shore." This is clever and bright, with about as much colour as Stanfield, and considerable naturalness and ease in the grouping of the horses. Mr. Calderon's picture of the "Attempted Escape of Mary Stuart from Lochleven Castle" has the great recommendation, in common with most of this artist's works, of possessing a visible arrangement of chiaroscuro—a merit wholly wanting in many painters of our rising school; in other respects, however, this work cannot be said to rise above the usual level of modern incident painting. Mr. Chapman's "Fiametta" is an example of our recent Anglo-Italian development; the marble seat and dark green foliage, the scattering of leaves, are all so executed and so felt as to recall Italian art and poetry. Mr. Cooke, the Academician, sends two pictures, whose titles sufficiently indicate their character, "Triassic Rocks, near Blue Anchor, North Somerset," and "The Breakwater at Porlock Weir, near Somerset—the shore is composed of Huge Boulders of Grauwacke." These are geological illustrations, neatly, and, in the scientific sense, most faithfully executed in oil, but they are not in any true sense pictures at all. There is a total absence of pictorial character in these works. There is neither colour-conception, nor any notion of the synthesis of forms, nor any conception of light and shade. They are totally without artistic grasp and force. Whether works of this description ought to be classed under the head of fine art at all may be doubtful; their due place, we should rather believe, would be in some scientific museum. The popularity of the artist is a proof that his particular kind of fidelity is appreciated, nor would we diminish his popularity; we desire only to have the grounds of it clearly understood. As a scientific observer, noting his observations with the brush, Mr. Cooke merits hearty praise; as an *artist*, in the highest sense of the word, such work as this can entitle him to no consideration. Mr. Collinson's little landscape, with a foreground of thistles, is very agreeable in its distance, but falsely elaborated in its foreground plants, which lose relation both to each other and to the rest of the work. Mr. Desmanges sends a portrait of the Princess of Wales, which is in nice taste, but the general tone of colour chosen, a sort of Quakerish drab, is displeasing. Mr. Frank Dillon contributes an imaginary landscape, called "The Haunt of the Crocodile," on which we cannot congratulate him; the prevalent colour is a disagreeable red, the subject is altogether uninteresting, and the execution is vulgar. Mr. Elmore's picture, "The Guardian," is exceedingly clever; the quality of brushwork in the lady's costume, and the dexterous management of the blue and red, deserve praise of the kind due to manual skill; the work does not pretend to be intellectual. Another very masterly piece of painting is Mr. Faed's "Embracing an Opportunity"; a girl is writing on two empty tea boxes, which serve her for a table, and we understand that she is busy with a love-letter, by the charming expression of her love-lighted face. The colour that Mr. Faed has found in the old tea chests will be to many spectators a revelation of unsuspected qualities. It is quite inconceivable by us how such a bad picture as Madame de Feyl's "Hebrew Mother" found admission into this gallery. It is even below the usual level of female painting; we should recommend the author to offer it to some *cure de campagne* in France, for the adornment of a village church and the edification of a pious peasantry, innocent of art. There is much good landscape quality in the work of another lady, Mrs. Follingsby; her Bavarian views show great intelligence of distance and mass, two very strong points in landscape; her management of gradations is judicious, and her oppositions well arranged; but her colour inclines too visibly to grey. Mr. Follingsby's large picture, "The Curt Reply," is certainly clever, for there is a good deal of real majesty in his Queen Elizabeth, and yet it is not a picture likely to remain long in the memory; partly, no doubt, because the subject has been so frequently painted, but also from the want of any artistic quality sufficient to lift it above the mass of second-class works.

Mr. Frith's "Fancy Fair" is, as is usual with his works, attractive at first for its possession of all the lower qualities of art, and then disappointing from the absence of the higher. Emerson said of the English, "they live in a *sub-mind*." Mr. Frith certainly lives in a sub-mind, and no doubt finds his account in remaining in that region. Whether he might have been greater we cannot tell; such as he is, he represents the intellect, as he hits the taste, of the thoughtless portion of our richer classes. Mr. Frost gives us a little girl holding a casket—an agreeable little study, probably a portrait, and in all respects better worth having than the nudities we remember. Mr. Goodall treats us to yet another version of swans and Stuarts, very bright and pleasing, "Iver House in the Time of Charles I." Every one knows that Mr. Goodall paints swans gracefully, and young princes of a certain unfortunate house with the sympathy due to them. Mr. Hayllar's "Margery" is, as usual with him, very clear and decided in execution. Mr. Hargitt's "Ardgour Hills from Ballaculish" is, on the whole, true to the forms of the mountains, and a pleasant rendering of one of the finest scenes we know. Why does Mr. Hodgson ever choose such subjects as "Grandpapa Colby"? There is no artistic interest in it whatever, nothing but straight lines and ugly forms; it is the interior of a joiner's shop of the least picturesque order; and if Mr. Hodgson had the greatest artistic genius, we venture to say that with such materials he would always fail to produce agreeable pictures. The work in this is, however, careful and modest. Mr. Hook has a scene from the coast of Brittany, painted with his usual freshness and vivacity, but apparently not finished. The blue tones of the sea are cleverly concentrated in the dress of the figures; the two Breton cows are considerably above common cattle painting. Mr. Hopkins has given some true sea colour in his "Tintagel"; the play of green and blue in the rippling water is right and agreeable. "The Casket," by Mr. Hughes, is a study of a pretty, pensive face. The colour of this picture is good; the girl's purple dress and rich auburn hair, with the greenish background and bright red coral beads, are all painted with evident relish. Mr. George Leslie has one distinctive quality—he can paint a lady; his women are almost always as truly refined as their assumed position in life will allow; which of course proves refinement in the artist, for, after all, artists continually paint their own minds. Mr. Leslie's workmanship is timid, and he has no comprehensiveness; his landscape is always feeble, and his quaint love of straight prim things, such as plain brick walls, makes him insensible to grandeur in arrangement; nevertheless, he possesses a peculiar talent, and is quite genuine and original. His little picture here, "The Grassy Walk," is a fair example of his usual choice of subject. If Mr. Leslie's landscape is feeble, Mr. J. T. Linnell's is even too confident; such *aplomb* as his is the result of a habit of manufacture; the bright effect is obtained by a well-remembered recipe, but drawing there is none, and of feeling no perceptible infusion. Mr. William Linton's "Neath Abbey, South Wales," is an attempt at one of nature's grand effects, but with poor result; it is not luminous, and the colour and drawing are alike without delicacy. "Petitioners to the Young Heir," by Mr. Marks, is skilfully painted, if a little hard, and with considerable comic sense; but it is remarkable how entirely devoid of any visible study of light-and-dark are the works of this artist. The idea of an arrangement with a view to this quality never seems to occur to him. We wish, for his own sake, that some art-publisher would take to engraving his pictures; that ordeal would prove their weakness in arrangement of weight of colour, and we insist the more on this point because in others his works are often truly meritorious.

The sketch called "Attention Diverted," by Mr. Millais, is not remarkable for him, but would be distinguished at once as the work of a strong painter by the great power and facility of its execution; as a piece of colour, the peculiar depth of blue reached in the lady's jacket may deserve mention. Mr. Poynter's "Adeline" has a certain richness and languor which give some women great influence over men. Mr. Ridley's slain gentleman is ghastly enough, and the picture is well arranged to produce its result; but such works are so unpleasant that it is unwise to paint them. If we found a real corpse, with a stab in its breast, we should have an inquest over it, and then bury it forthwith; but Mr. Ridley would have us hang it up on our walls for lifelong contemplation. Such subjects are admirable for portfolios only, not for the walls of rooms. Mr. Sandys has three works of merit, executed in the purest artistic spirit, the spirit which loves to dwell on the artistic qualities of objects. These heads mean very little, but they constitute, when so represented, works of art which are able to give lasting pleasure. Mr. George Stanfield's landscape painting is of a quality we cannot approve; there can be no question about its manual skill, but it is quite artificial and systematic, containing no passage of unexpected tenderness or felicity, no accent of affection, no stroke of power. Such art as this, in comparison with passionate art, is what ordinary wood-engraving is to good etching—it satisfies the public, but it never stirs the heart of the true lover of nature. Miss Solomon's "Imogen" is rather hard and dry; the rocks are curiously arranged round the figure, in an artless manner. Mr. Scott's "Eve of the Deluge" has one point—alarm just breaking in upon the tranquillity of sensuality; revellers are drinking with women, and one of them sees, far off, with terrified gaze, the ominous rising of the waters. The attempt to reach a supposed ethnological type for the male faces has resulted in a disagreeable ugliness. It may be observed, as a minor defect, that

the ark does not at the first glance explain itself; it seems a small object near, instead of a large one at some distance; for the first second or so we took it for a large wine-vat. Mr. Smallfield's "Beyond the Convent," is an illustration of trees in silhouette, with a dim, dull, and very unsatisfactory foreground. Mr. Stanhope's "Wine Press" is a mystic picture of Christ treading out grapes; it seems morbid, and is false in one point—the legs and feet are not stained with grape juice. We believe all attempts of this kind to realize a metaphor are mistaken. Such metaphors are right in written language, because there they are vague enough; but a painted metaphor is far too visible. The picture of "The Mill" is still more evidently morbid; there is a medium between Mr. Frith's healthy thoughtlessness and Mr. Stanhope's unhealthy thought. Mr. Henry Wallis deserves praise for his very true moonlight in "After Supper at Capri"; it is one of the most successful attempts at the colour of moonlight we remember to have met with. "Dr. Johnson's First Interview with John Wilkes" is a sprightly piece of vulgar painting by Mr. Ward, and no doubt proves one of the most popular attractions in this exhibition. Mr. Watts has three portraits in a grave and stately manner, the one of Mr. Gladstone being intellectual, though curiously strained in expression; but this artist has also, we regret to observe, an ugly and almost offensive study of the nude, of which, perhaps, the less we say the better. Mr. Wynfield's quiet painting contrasts agreeably with the dash of his neighbour, Mr. Ward. There is a quaint incident of life in the middle ages by Mr. Yeames. A high-born lady crosses a brook on stepping-stones, her train held by an obsequious male attendant, whose unmascined duty loses none of its absurdity at the hand of Mr. Yeames; this picture is neatly executed, but the humour of a little incident of this sort is scarcely powerful enough to give the work lasting interest.

The Dining-room Screen, by Messrs. Yeames, Hodgson, Leslie, Storey, Wynfield, and Marks, of subjects relating to eating and drinking, and all taken from Shakspeare, is a praiseworthy experiment. We have seen a room decorated by these artists in the same manner with Shakspearian subjects, and the result is good; the finish, of course, is purposely limited to what is strictly necessary for expression and decorative effect. Mrs. Anderson's bright pictures, "Song of the Nightingale" and "Song of the Lark," are not decoration, but furniture, and as such would assort well with glaring upholstery. Mr. Whistler's "Lady in Japanese Dress" is a remarkable work in its way, full of quaint taste and truly artistic perception. It may not be known to all our readers that there exists at present amongst certain artists in London a perfect mania for everything Japanese, and Mr. Whistler seems to have caught it. He has rejected, we suppose on principle, the whole art of chiaroscuro, and given us only colour and drawing, both very strangely true, and having new harmonies and an unaccustomed grace.

REVIEWS.

THE SCEPTICISM OF BAYLE.*

THERE are no writers who appear to us to have been more frequently misunderstood than those who have acquired the reputation of scepticism. A sceptic, properly speaking, is the antithesis to a dogmatist. He is a man who holds that nothing can be positively affirmed on any subject, and who keeps his mind in a state of perpetual doubt on all subjects. It may reasonably be doubted whether, in point of fact, such a person ever existed; but at all events it appears to us clear that considerable injustice is done by applying such a name to the principal persons to whom it has been applied in modern times. It is difficult to form an opinion as to the ancient philosophers. We know about Zeno and Pyrrho only by reports which must have passed through almost any number of hands before they fell into their present shape, and there was a sort of simplicity and eager delight in ingenuity about the early days of speculation which, in times of great artificial refinement, it is difficult to estimate correctly. The mere pleasure of going through ingenious processes may have led many people to say much more than they really and practically meant. In modern times the whole tone of philosophy has been far more earnest, and the attempt to arrive at the real truth, or at all events to inquire with a view to real results, has been much more sincere. The long and intimate alliance between theology and philosophy had many evils, but it had the advantage of making speculation a matter of infinitely greater practical importance, and of a much wider practical range, than was the case in the old world. In a state of society in which philosophical views led straight to moral, political, ecclesiastical, and international consequences of the most definite kind, there was much less probability that men should amuse themselves idly with verbal feats of ingenuity than in those early times in which Hiram and Solomon sent each other riddles, and in which Zeno invented his remarkable puzzles about the impossibility of motion.

The two chief writers who in modern times have earned the title of sceptics are Bayle and Hume. We should feel much more inclined to describe Hume as what would now be called a Positivist; and as to Bayle, though it might be more difficult to

* Bayle's Dictionary. Articles—Arcesillas, Panicians, Pyrrho, Zenon, &c.; and Eclaircissements.

say what his own views were, we think that to describe him as a sceptic, in the proper sense of the word, shows considerable want of appreciation both of his character and of the circumstances under which he wrote. The chief grounds on which his claims to the title rest are some of the articles in his Dictionary, of which we may specially refer to those on Arcessilas, the Paulicians, Pyrrho, and Zeno, and the "Éclaircissement sur les Manichéens," published at the end of the whole book. The articles are most remarkable in themselves, and the general question which they raise, as well as the special question what Bayle himself meant by them, is in a variety of ways full of interest. Bayle's own style is perfectly admirable, and the reader of these and other articles of the same sort is certainly apt to be led to one rather sceptical conclusion—the conclusion, namely, that there is hardly anything left to say upon the great controversies which lie at the roots of morals and theology which has not been said over and over again, and which, in particular, is not to be found in Bayle. For instance, in various places which it would be tiresome to pick out and arrange, Bayle investigates and balances against each other nearly all the arguments relating to the great controversy as to Atheism, Deism, and Christianity in its various forms which have since been urged, and are now being urged, in all parts of Europe to every kind of person. There is little of any importance in Butler, for instance, on the one hand, or in Voltaire on the other, or in the writings of the other great champions in the Deistical controversy down to our own time, if we except some of the transcendentalist refinements of more modern days, which is not to be found in Bayle. Whatever he does say he says with a vigour, precision, and perfect absence of any sort of obscurity which we hardly ever find in controversial writers of our own age, and which, according to our mode of handling such topics, would very probably appear irreverent merely by reason of its plainness. There is, for instance, a long argument in the article on the Paulicians or Manichees, in which the different theories held by various schools of theologians as to the origin of evil and the freedom of the will are criticized with merciless severity; the relative positions in which they put God and man being illustrated, not flippantly or with levity, but with a strangely careful minuteness, by comparing them to those of a mother who, seeing her daughter's virtue endangered, nevertheless, for one reason or another founded on respect for her free will, altogether refuses to interfere. An imaginary Manichee is introduced proposing these difficulties to Jesuits, Jansenists, Calvinists, and Socinians in turn, and proposing to each a slightly different modification of his illustration, in order to suit the special theory of the person whom he controvorts.

The natural inference drawn from this, which is repeated on all occasions and in a variety of forms, was that Bayle meant to attack all theology, and he was accordingly bitterly reproached with his infidelity. He replies to the reproach in one of the *éclaircissements* which form postscript to his book, and takes up with extreme vigour, and at great length, a line which has been taken frequently since his time. This line is, that to pile up mystery above mystery, and to confuse and utterly humiliate human reason, is the best service which can be rendered to the cause of religion, inasmuch as by that course men are prepared to accept submissively any mysteries which may be proposed to their faith. Montaigne (on whom, oddly enough, Bayle has no article) took the same ground at great length, and since his time it has been occupied by many others whose sincerity is less open to suspicion than Bayle's. It is very hard to believe that Bayle was sincere. His refutations are too trenchant and vigorous to have been written merely to show the weakness of the human mind. They are much better illustrations of its strength. It is indeed obvious enough, to any one who will take the pains to study what he has written, that his real objection was not so much to dogmatism in general, or even to theological dogmatism in particular, as to the strange scholastic system—for strange it now appears to us—in which all the thoughts of his age upon important subjects were wrapped up. To think of Bayle as a real consistent sceptic is impossible. His Dictionary is in every part a complete answer to such a charge. Every article in it is pointed, precise, full of life, and full of good sense, and as vigorous in its way of dealing with facts as any piece of literary workmanship in the world. It is only in connection with philosophical and theological speculations that the scepticism with which he is charged appears. On all other topics he is a model of shrewd good sense. To take one illustration amongst a thousand, nothing can be less sceptical than the appendix, or *éclaircissement* as he calls it, which follows the one relating to the Manichees. It is a defence—not a very successful one—of his Dictionary against the charge of indecency which had been brought against it. Bayle lays down the rules according to which authors ought to deal with certain subjects, with a vigour and precision which no one could exceed; and tries, with far more ingenuity than success, to show that his own practice could be justified by his principles. This is so far from being sceptical that it is the very antithesis of scepticism. It is elaborate ingenious dogmatism applied to a matter of great intricacy. It must, moreover, be observed, that in every part of his writings Bayle shows unflinching confidence in the canons of reason, and in the resources of his own mind. He argues on all occasions and on all subjects, and thus shows a degree of confidence in the process of reasoning which no strangeness in the results at which he arrives can prove to be insincere.

By these, amongst other reasons, we are led to the belief that Bayle's scepticism was a mere pretence, intended to cover his disbelief in the theological systems of his day;

and that his attempts to show how orthodox and holy a thing thorough scepticism is, and how it may be used to support any system of religious belief which involves submission to mysteries, was a mere exercise of insincere, or at best of half-sincere, ingenuity. There was far more excuse for such insincerity in Bayle's days than in our own. If he had not provided himself with some such shield, it is difficult to say what might have been the consequences. An undisguised avowal of his real opinions might have led to imprisonment, or even to death; for there are remarkable proofs—amongst other places, in Bossuet's writings against the Protestants—that the Protestant ministers, both in England and in Holland, were most eager to persecute the "libertines," as the phrase then was; and Bossuet complacently contrasts the absence of infidelity, or at least the impossibility of avowing it, in France with its boldness in other countries.

In our own days, however, many writers have really persuaded themselves to believe what Bayle pretended to believe. Men of considerable eminence and ability are to be met with who say—sometimes in so many words, sometimes indirectly—that reason leads to absolute scepticism, that faith is diametrically opposed to it, and that no considerations drawn from the one source can have any reference to the other. There is a dashing swagger and a pretension to superior wisdom about this way of speaking which makes it worth while to examine shortly the grounds on which reason is thus dealt with, and to see whether Bayle—who, if any one, would have succeeded in such a task—really did contrive to show that reason leads, not to truth, but to every sort of contradiction and absurdity. Perhaps the strongest effort which he makes in this direction is to be found in his article on Zeno, which supplies standing illustrations to those who attempt to make reason commit suicide, but which appears to us, and which in our opinion must have appeared to Bayle himself, to be nothing more than an illustration of the fact that a false method of philosophy leads to absurd results, and that knowledge is to be derived, not from the manipulation of words, but from careful arrangement of the evidence of the senses.

It is difficult to give an idea in a few words of the article itself. It is written, as all Bayle's articles are, in the most inconvenient of all possible forms. There is a short text, which fills just forty lines of large type, dispersed in morsels of two or three lines over ten large folio pages. The rest of the pages is filled with double columns of small type in the nature of notes, running from A to I, supplemented by corollaries as long as themselves, and fortified by marginal notes which are often essential to the argument. The principal features, however, of the article are the illustrations which it gives of Zeno's "hypothèse de l'acatalepsie ou de l'incompréhensibilité de toutes choses." These illustrations exhibit, first, Zeno's famous arguments against motion; next, supplementary arguments to the same effect which he might have used—and, as Bayle observes, perhaps did use—drawn from the difficulties which may be proposed as to the nature of space, extent, the vacuum and the plenum, the divisibility and indivisibility of matter. Pursuing the subject in another note, Bayle anticipates a great part, perhaps the greater part, of the arguments of Berkeley on the existence of matter, and at last arrives—though in scholastic language, and as if he were reaching an absurd, or at least paradoxical, result—at the general doctrine which is held by all modern philosophers deserving the name of the relativity of human knowledge. Speaking of the "Solvitur ambulando" by which Diogenes refuted Zeno, he says—

C'est le sophisme que les logiciens appellent *ignorationem cluchi*. C'était sortir de l'état de la question, car ce philosophe ne rejetait pas le mouvement, mais il ne croit pas qu'il ne semble à l'homme qu'il y a du mouvement, mais il soutenoit que réellement rien ne se meut, et il le prouvoit par des raisons très-subtils et tout à fait embarrassantes.

This remark, though Bayle hardly seems to have seen it, goes in reality to the root of the whole matter; and if it were properly understood, and its truth generally admitted, would put an end to a great deal of the nonsense which people are in the habit of talking, often with the best intentions, about the mysteries with which we are surrounded on all sides, and the imbecility of human reason, even in matters of the commonest kind. In order to make this clear, we will first exhibit in somewhat greater detail a few of Zeno's paradoxes as reported by Bayle, and then state what we conceive to be the true view of the subject, and the real way out of the maze in which such writers attempt to envelop the human mind. Zeno proved the impossibility of motion by four principal reasons, which Bayle thus restates from Aristotle:—

First, if an arrow which tends towards a certain place moved, it would be at once at rest and in motion. This is contradictory, therefore it does not move. That it would be at once at rest and in motion is thus proved. At each instant the arrow is in a space equal to itself, and is therefore at rest in that place; for a thing is not in a place from which it is moving, therefore there is no moment at which it moves; and if there were such a moment it would be at once at rest and in motion. This argument rests on two principles. First, a thing cannot be in two places at once. Next, time is not infinitely divisible, for one hour is over before the next begins; but if a moment were infinitely divisible, it would never have passed. Therefore the next never would begin. "Ceux," says Bayle with a want of temper unusual in him, "qui nient cette conséquence doivent être abandonnés ou à leur stupidité, ou à leur mauvaise foi, ou à la force insurmontable de leurs préjugés." Aristotle was one of these unhappy persons, for he maintained that time was not indivisible.

The second objection is that, if there were motion, the moving body would pass from place to place; but that cannot be, because space is infinitely divisible. To this Aristotle replies that space is infinitely divisible only potentially. Bayle calls this answer "pitiful." Time, he insists, cannot be infinitely divisible, because it does actually pass. Whereas space is infinitely divisible, because you can always cut a given thing into two parts.

The third objection is only another illustration of the first. It is the old riddle of the hare and the tortoise.

The fourth objection is so odd that we are by no means sure that we understand it. Take a table four yards long. Let two sticks rest on it, each of which is also four yards long. One (A) touches one end of the table. Two yards of the length of the other (B) lie on the other end. A moves till it lies at full length on the table. B does not begin to move till A reaches its extremity, when it begins to move in the opposite direction at the same rate. In half the time during which A has been in motion, A and B lie side by side on the table, covering its whole length. A of course has taken twice as long as B to get into this position. "Then," says Bayle, "two moving bodies pass over the same space at the same rate, and one takes twice as long as the other to do it. Hence two hours or minutes are equal to one." That the two sticks have passed over equal spaces, at equal rates, in unequal times, is proved thus. A has passed over the whole table, which is four yards long. B has touched the whole of A, which is also four yards long. The unfortunate Aristotle observes that the space passed over by the stick A is measured against the table which is at rest, and that passed over by the stick B is measured against the stick A, which is in motion; but this, says Bayle, does not remove the difficulty, which is, that "it seems incomprehensible how in the same time a piece of wood can traverse four yards with that side which touches another stick, while it traverses only two with that side which touches the table." To a modern reader the difficulty lies in the fact that Bayle, or any other human being, saw any difficulty at all in it. If the sticks were mathematical points, it would be obvious that they moved over equal spaces in equal time, for, after A had reached B, it would move to the west end of the table in precisely the same time as B moved to the east end; and, taking Bayle's illustration, each point in each stick moves over precisely the same space—namely, two yards in the same time. The difficulty about the two sides of the stick is as if a man should call it a mystery that, in walking down the Strand, he passed five hundred people on the right hand, and only two hundred and fifty on the left. It is obvious enough, from other parts of the same article, that Bayle had very indistinct ideas about motion, for he says in a marginal note to this fourth objection—"The same difficulty may be made about the small wheels of a coach, which go over as much ground as the large wheels in the same number of turns on their centre. The same may be said of two wheels, one large and the other small, on the same axle." These statements are both false in fact. The small wheel of a coach turns much oftener than the large one, unless it drags, and the small wheel on the same axle passes over less ground. It is difficult to understand how a man who had ever seen a common wheel and axle for drawing water from a well could have fallen into so gross a blunder as this last. The contrivance would be idle and ineffectual unless each point in the rim of the wheel, which is only a continuous lever, passed through a much larger space in each revolution than any point on the rim of the axle.

The first and second objections may easily be shown to be mere ingenious riddles. Time, says Bayle, is not infinitely divisible, but consists of minima called moments. In each moment the body is at rest in a given space. Unless, therefore, it could be in two places at once, or at rest and in motion at the same moment, it will never get from place to place. This argument is a mere tangle of fallacies. First, the word motion means nothing else than the fact that at one moment the body is in one place, and at each successive moment in a different place a little further on. Next, if time is divisible into minima, there is no reason why a body should not be in different places *at once*, or at rest and in motion *at once*, if *at once* means in one of these minima. The minima, or "nows," may be imagined to be of any length. Suppose each "now" were a quarter of an hour. A man during one "now" might walk a mile, or be carried fifteen miles in an express train. The absurdity of the argument may be displayed by stating it in other words. Moving bodies require a certain time to pass from one spot to another, but at each moment they are in a given space. Therefore there is no moment in which they can pass from one space to another. Therefore they do not pass. The whole argument, it is obvious, rests upon the supposition that they do. You assume the existence of motion in order to disprove its existence. Bayle, indeed, attempts to answer this by saying that the argument should be stated otherwise. "If bodies moved they would require, &c." But, as he says of Aristotle, we may say of him—this is pitiful. It only puts the difficulty one step further off. How do you know that, if bodies moved, they would require a certain time to pass through a certain space? Only by seeing them move. The conditional proposition assumes motion just as much as the direct one.

As for the difficulty, that if a body moved it would have to pass over an infinite number of divisions of space, which is impossible except in an infinite time, the answer is simply that it is not impossible. How do you know that it is impossible for a body to pass over infinite space in a finite time? After more or less wriggling the real answer must always be because infinite space is very long. Then, if you choose to use "infinite" to

mean very short, the ground of the objection fails. All the puzzles about infinite space and infinite time are founded upon the trick of using "infinite" sometimes to mean "too long to be imagined," and at other times to mean "too short to be imagined."

The oddest part of the whole puzzle is, that Bayle declares that Zeno never denied, and could not deny, apparent motion, but only real motion. The clue to the whole maze lies in this. It is obvious, though it certainly is difficult to understand it fully, that Bayle had some strange distinction present to his mind between appearance and reality, and that this pervaded the whole of the philosophy which he delighted to twist into grotesque and impossible shapes. Once fairly grasp the truth that there is no reality except appearance, that words are only signs by which mental pictures are called up, that the correspondence of such images with the external world is what we mean by truth, and that our own assurance of such correspondence is what we mean by knowledge, and all Bayle's subtleties, and indeed all other such riddles, are easily explained.

It may appear mere loss of time to insist upon this, as nobody ever attached the slightest practical importance to such trifles. In fact, many people do attach great practical importance to them. They use them as an argument in favour of believing absurdities which they dignify by the name of mysteries. Roman Catholics often justify a belief in transubstantiation on such grounds. The following argument, for instance, was really used in favour of that belief by a man of great learning and remarkable ability. Mathematics, he said, disclose mysteries as profound as transubstantiation, as thus:—

Let $a=b$. Then $a^2=ab$. And $a^2-b^2=ab-b^2$, or $(a+b)(a-b)=(a-b)b$, or $a+b=b$, or $2a=a$, or $2=1$. Stripped of its algebraical form, this notable mystery may be thus expressed:—Twice nothing is nothing, therefore two equals one. Recall the true nature of words, and the matter becomes perfectly plain. Multiplication means the process of adding groups of magnitudes to each other; but if there are no magnitudes, the process cannot be performed, and thus the phrase "twice nothing" is, in the strict sense of the word, unmeaning. "Twice" does not modify "nothing." It is like talking of square friendship or circular reverence. In other words " 2 " and " 1 " are adjectives, not substantives. The meaning of the above riddle is—"Nothing" is the only substantive which can supply a sense to the expressions $2=1$, for "two nothing" and "one nothing" are different names for the same thing.

The so-called "mysteries" about space and time admit of an answer which we do not remember to have seen given, and which it may therefore be worth while to state very shortly. The "mystery" about space is that, on the one hand, unlimited space cannot be imagined as a whole; and that, on the other hand, a limitation of all space is equally difficult to imagine. But let us see whether an end to space cannot be described. Suppose a man were carried through space for an enormous distance, and suppose he were suddenly to lose every perception of extent, retaining all his other faculties, and merely reflecting the extended things which he had previously seen, without immediately perceiving any. This is imaginable; for if we shut our eyes and lost our sense of touch, and what has been called the muscular sense, it would actually happen. Next, suppose that millions of people making the same journey always met with the same experience; would it not be correct to say that space ended at the moment when, and at the place where, it was last perceived, that on arriving at that spot the next moment of time was without a corresponding space, and that this was therefore the end of space? This is a distinct image; whether or not any fact corresponds to it is another question. As to the end of time, we have only to imagine all change of every sort at an end, and time would be no more. There would be an "everlasting now." It wants little imagination to realize this. Simple as they are, these two illustrations, well considered, would solve all the "mysteries" about space and time, and reduce the infinite divisibility or extent of either to a bare question of fact, to be decided by experience.

It may be asked, Do you then eliminate all mystery from life? Is it unreasonable to believe anything which we cannot understand? For many reasons it is necessary to give distinct answers to these questions, and the answer in each case must depend on the meaning of the words. If you mean by a mystery a proposition which contradicts either the senses or the reason, then assuredly all mystery ought to be eliminated from life, for such mysteries are only absurdities under another name. If by a mystery you mean a proposition relating to matters of which we are ignorant, then mystery will never be eliminated from life till men become omniscient. If, by believing what you cannot understand, you mean, as many people appear to mean, arriving on one set of grounds (which are generally called reason) at the conclusion that the proposition in question is false, and on another set of grounds (which are generally called faith) at the conclusion that it is true, and then resting in the conclusion that it is true, the habit appears to us a most pernicious form of dishonesty. If, by believing what you cannot understand, you mean believing that a proposition which to you conveys either no meaning, or an apparently false meaning, nevertheless conveys to those who are better instructed than yourself a true and important meaning of which you are ignorant, but towards which, if you are sufficiently patient and thoughtful, the proposition put before you will be a guide; then, believing what you do not understand, when proper reasons are assigned for doing so, is one of the greatest acts of wisdom which a man can perform.

[February 24, 1866.]

MR. TUPPER AS A DRAMATIST.*

TO plain people, the position of a man of true genius with an established reputation seems one of unalloyed happiness. Internally, he has the ever-present consolation of his own noble thoughts; while, externally, he is surrounded by the grateful admiration of the public whom he has instructed and amused, made wiser and happier. The love of his contemporaries, and the consciousness of his own insight and power, might, one would think, combine to fill his soul with tranquil yet glowing bliss. But uneasy lies the head that wears the laurel. No more than the crown of royalty, does the garland of bay always bring peace to the possessor. The fiery soul working out its way, and o'er informing the tenement of clay, is naturally not invariably a pleasant or a peaceful tenant. A man of genius is wont to think nothing done while aught remains to do. If he has won imperishable fame in one pursuit, he is eager to earn as much renown in every other. Success as a lyric poet counts for nothing until he has achieved success in the drama as well. Each Muse in turn must yield to the ardent assaults of the vagrant worshipper.

A remarkable example of this restlessness of genius may be found in the five-act tragedy which Mr. Martin Tupper has just presented to his faithful public. Not content with having outshone the lustre of Bacon, once the wisest of all philosophers, he aspires to snatch the laurel from the brow of Shakspeare, hitherto the greatest of all dramatists. Henceforth, in the dramatic art, as in all other things, the historian of the human intellect will divide his subject into the Pre-Tupperian and Post-Tupperian ages. Those whom unkind destiny made to exist in the almost Cimmerian darkness of the Pre-Tupperian period will be of small account in the annals of the race. Aristotle, Bacon, Shakspeare were lights perhaps as bright as their times could endure. But the torch has now been entrusted to a mightier runner in the race. With the modesty of real greatness, the dramatist of the future nominally admits that Shakspeare is "the great exemplar of us all," though it may be noticed that, as a matter of fact, it is quite impossible for his most malignant enemy to accuse Mr. Tupper of having stooped to imitate his predecessor in historic drama. But though patriotic prejudice—for even the greatest of mortals are not exempt from this—may blind the chief apostle of our era to the inferiority of the Pre-Tupperian Shakspeare, we are glad to find that respect for tradition does not induce him weakly to spurn the Pre-Tupperian Aristotle. "Aristotle's dogma as to the unities," he says loftily, "might have been all very well for the infancy of the drama, when a few rustics, smeared with wine-lees, impersonated in a cart for the honorarium of a goat." We fear that a hasty perusal of the article on Thespis in Lemprière is scarcely likely to give anybody a quite exhaustive account of the Greek drama, because the famous trio of tragedians, as it happened, came after Thespis. The plays of Eschylus and Sophocles and Euripides were not, we believe, impersonated in a cart by a few rustics smeared with wine-lees; and as the last of them was born a century before Aristotle, it is fair to suppose that, in talking about the unities and the rest, he was not referring entirely to the mythic ages of the drama. However, the Greeks were no doubt a parcel of miserable creatures, Aristotle and his rustics included: and what was quite good enough for them would be "absurd and impossible in our advanced age, and no wise dramatist will be bound by it." They are all superseded. The superficial, shallow teaching of the *Ethica* is seen at its true worth when compared with the sublimer wisdom of our Proverbial Philosopher. And he now invites us to consider by the light of his tragedy the trashiness of those overrated men, the ancient dramatists who smeared their faces with wine-lees, and declaimed for a goat. Mr. Tupper has benignly informed his friends how he came to turn dramatist. "This play has crystallized quickly and lately out of a small literary misadventure." He had been meditating a Life of Sir Walter Raleigh. Dissatisfied, we presume, with the reflection that what he had written hitherto was only read by young ladies with very weak minds, he resolved to write something which grown-up men might find at least endurable. The bays which the weak-headed young ladies had twined round his brows—and which, by the way, have been unaccountably left out in the bust of himself prefixed by the author to his recent editions—were not an adequate recognition of his more substantial merits. So the philosopher restlessly aspired to become historian. After having come to this resolve, and after fixing on Raleigh for a theme, he began to read about his proposed hero. Most men would have read first, and befooled themselves that Raleigh was a hero afterwards. But then most men, unhappily for the world, are very unlike Mr. Tupper. He evolved a conception of Raleigh out of his own inner consciousness, and then hastened outside to find material for a book about him. At this point the misadventure began. He found the ground pre-occupied. There were biographies of Raleigh in abundance. The being evolved from the inner consciousness grew pale and unpleasant at the dawn of fact. Still something must be done. The restlessness of true genius cannot be resisted or conquered. If the philosopher and the lyric poet could not add success as an historian to his roll of glories, he would turn dramatist:—

It suddenly occurred to me that there had been no fair dramatic impersonation of Sir Walter Raleigh, neither could I call to mind any just histrionic

* *Raleigh: his Life and his Death.* A Historical Play, in Five Acts. By Martin F. Tupper. London: John Mitchell. 1866.

sketch of the special temperaments of Elizabeth and James, *whereupon immediately this play flowed out.*

Nothing could surpass the easy simplicity of this process; the play flowed out, and then "crystallized quickly." The crystal is worth looking at, as showing how a profound philosopher is capable also of true poetic fervour and the power of dramatic realization when he is urged on by the uneasy impulses of genius, to which Mr. Tupper once confessed before, when he told us that from the next bowels of his soul lava torrents war and roll, and his hot thoughts in language pent stand their own granite monument. What in the department of lyric poetry roars and rolls and hardens into a granite monument, in the drama flows out mildly and becomes a crystal.

The way in which King James is first introduced gives the reader an excellent assurance that Mr. Tupper is as mighty in his grasp of dramatic art as he is profound in solving the puzzles of philosophy. At the beginning of the fifth act Raleigh is brought before the Council, and into the presence of the King. "Stand thou by, thou traitor, Raleigh," exclaims Coke, the Attorney-General. It is perhaps scarcely worth mentioning that it was not the Privy Council, but the Court of King's Bench, before which Raleigh was brought to receive the fatal sentence, and that Coke had been promoted from the position of Attorney-General twelve years before. One must not be too particular about these points. Genius soars far above the dull level of chronological accuracy. After Coke has told Raleigh to stand by, we are introduced to the "just histrionic sketch" of the King thus:—

KING (*severely*).

We haer'd rawly o' thee, upon my sawl.

[*The councillors murmur approbation.*]

Horace says that a comic subject should not be handled in tragic phrase; so Mr. Tupper no doubt believes in the converse, that a tragic subject ought to be treated with tragic severity of verse. Raleigh proceeds to argue that, as the Queen had commissioned him, and as England was then at war with Spain, his depredations on the Spanish marine were neither misdemeanours nor felonies nor treasons. Whereupon the just histrionic sketch is resumed:—

KING.

By my sawl, man, but ye've caught me; only for this,
Being as he said in time o' war, he's scathless;
A battleship on the high seas is nae pirate;
What says the Lord Chief Justice? Is it sae?

The Chief Justice then admits that Raleigh's defence is good, on which Coke falls back upon the old conviction for treason. "Sooth, man, that's sooth!" exclaims the King, and after Raleigh's appeal, he says with majestic dignity, "Man, ye maun die." He is equally obdurate to Lady Raleigh:—

KING.

I tell ye, nay, dame; I maun haie the lond,
I maun haie it for Carr. Here (*to CARR*) lead her off.

Altogether, in the whole play, twenty-three lines are put into the King's mouth, and this Mr. Tupper calls a just histrionic sketch of his special temperament. Queen Elizabeth is a personage of not less dignity, and her first appearance is not less magnificent. Raleigh throws down his cloak, saying, "Thus let me bridge it for your Majesty."

QUEEN.

Bridget, quothe! didst say thy Bridget wove it.

[*The courtiers laugh.*]

RALEIGH.

My liege, the flashing of such ready wit
Becomes a court so brilliant.

On occasion, however, the Queen can ascend to indescribable dramatic passion. She finds Raleigh making love to a maid of honour, and after calling her "baggage and hussey" pretty liberally, and threatening to "claw her cheeks," winds up thus:—

QUEEN.

What? to our face?
Vixen, thou liest! loving him, quothe!
Look, I will tear him from his dizzy height
And fling him in the mire, where that witch'd cloak
Bridged him to fortune. Hussey! with my knight!

[*The QUEEN sweeps away in a rage.*]

It is to be hoped that pedants will cease to talk of Cassandra and Clytemnestra and Medea after this. The chivalrous Essex is equally skilfully portrayed. He is jealous of Raleigh's favour with the Queen, and he relieves his feelings by crying—

Gadstooh! the hedgerow harriard flies too high,
And he must be o'erfalconed.

After using up "Gadstooh," his next speech begins with "Fore Heaven"; and after this he is forced to fall back on plain "Ha! How!" and "Ha!" Indeed, this is the sum and substance of what he has to say. Raleigh, as the hero, is naturally a much more temperate character. There is perhaps a slight anachronism in making him talk as nobody could possibly have talked who lived in the dark ages, when the *Proverbial Philosophy* was not written. Gondomar, too, says things which would have made him an endless reputation at the modern tea-table, if he could only have survived to our day. Mr. Tupper so far complies with ordinary tragic usage as to put a mournful retrospect of the past into the mouth of the unfortunate hero. As might be anticipated, it is a very different thing indeed from the corresponding speeches of Antigone or Ajax or Wolsey or Desdemona:—

Lo now,—my glories all have passed away!—
Yon brilliant Eldorado, vanity;
My pretty Jersey-princedom, vanity;
My colonies and adventures, vanity;
Those earliest courtier days, all vanity;
My Sherborne gardens, and grand Durham Houst,
My jewels, and my silver coat of mail,
My very hose acrast with diamond sparks,
My splendid masques and tourneys,—vanity;
And then, mine eldest born killed in Guiana,
My good name ruined, and my fortunes wrecked,
My hopes and fears, my glory and my shame,
All vanity made up of vanities.

The notion of making a hero on the eve of death appeal to his "very hose" in proof of the vanity of all things is too sublimely pathetic to escape the notice of the dullest reader. There is a touch here which the rustic strollers with smeared faces could never have approached or dreamt of.

It would be simply laughable to criticize the structure of the plot of *Raleigh*. We can only say that it is below even the Tupperian standard, and the force of nature can no further go. It is the sort of thing which a school-girl might write after she had been once or twice to the play, and had drenched her mind with Proverbial Philosophy. It is not even funny, and this marks a distinct decay in Mr. Tupper's wonderful powers.

TROLLOPE'S COMMONWEALTH OF FLORENCE.
VOLS. III. & IV.*
(Second Notice.)

MR. TROLLOPE'S Third Volume answers roughly to what we may venture to call the reigns of Cosmo and Lorenzo de' Medici. He begins indeed a little earlier, with the Peace with Milan in 1428, but this first stage of Medicean rule forms the main subject of the volume. The word reign, which we have just used, is hardly applicable to Cosmo, but, in everything but legal form, it is fully applicable to Lorenzo. Between the two comes the short domination of Pietro, or of those who ruled in his name. It is perhaps the most singular feature in the whole story that an authority like that of the Medici, an authority which had no legal existence whatever, could not only be transmitted from father to son, but could endure what is commonly felt to be a severe test even for an hereditary monarchy—namely, the test of a regency. For we can apply no other name to the government of Florence during the time of Pietro and the early years of Lorenzo. Cosmo ruled by dint of personal qualities, and his government was not more violent or illegal than the Florentine were used to, not more so than that of any other Florentine party leader would have been. A certain amount of banishments, confiscations, and executions accompanied every political change as a matter of course. Cosmo's own imprisonment and banishment had been fully as unjust as any of his own later actions, and the conduct of his great adversary, Rinaldo degli Albizzi, was fully as traitorous as that of any of the Medici. But Cosmo, like Augustus, gradually accustomed his countrymen to what, however cloaked under republican forms, was practically the government of a single person. We find him, when another person held the highest office in the commonwealth, and when he does not seem himself to have held any office at all, spoken of as "Head of the Republic," and put forward, as Head of the Republic, to make answer to the addresses of foreign ambassadors. During his long period of influence, reaching from 1434 to 1464, he was able to establish his power and to hand it on to his descendants, till, from an undefined influence in a democratic State, it grew into a recognised sovereignty, adorned with the usual titles and trappings of Italian princedom. From the establishment of the Medicean ascendancy Florence ceases to act as a perfectly independent Power. Her history now consists of the alternate expulsions and restorations of the Medici. But those expulsions and restorations are no longer the unaided work of the Florentine commonwealth. Undoubtedly, from the expulsion of Pietro in 1494, the general feeling was distinctly against Medicean supremacy; the Medici, in short, had been found out. But to get rid of them required a favourable position of foreign affairs; and all their expulsions and restorations now depended, not solely on the state of parties within the walls of Florence, but on the general state of politics throughout Italy. The Medici, who, a century before, were wealthy and powerful indeed, but still plebeians in rank and dependent for their wealth on the pursuits of commerce, have come to be looked upon as princes. The expelled Medici look on themselves, and get others to look upon them, as sovereigns unjustly deprived of their inheritance. Lorenzo himself marries into a princely Roman house; a century later, a daughter of the house of Medici has become a fit bride for the Most Christian King. The way in which these Florentine bankers won what we may call their naturalization in princely society is even more remarkable than the analogous naturalization of Buonapartes and Bernadottes in our own age. Probably nothing but the overweening power of the bridegroom would have constrained an ex-Emperor of the Romans to give his daughter in a very doubtful kind of marriage to a self-styled Emperor of the French. But the overweening power was there, and that was enough.

* *A History of the Commonwealth of Florence, from the Earliest Independence of the Commune to the Fall of the Republic in 1531.* By T. Adolphus Trollope. 4 vols. Vols. III. & IV. London: Chapman & Hall. 1865.

Bernadotte again, recognised as King of Sweden by the Swedes, could hardly be refused his place as a King at the hands of other nations. But the Medici had neither the irresistible power of Buonaparte nor the national recognition of Bernadotte. The election, nearly consecutively, of two Popes out of their house probably did more for them than anything else. Leo, condemned as he is by any standard either of priestly or of political virtue, no doubt did much to make the name of his family splendid and popular in the eyes of the world. And Leo did keep some sort of measure in the kind of tyranny which he established in his native city. A lower depth was reached in Clement the Seventh. At last Florence became the victim of the reconciliation of Pope and Caesar, the means of a convenient establishment for their two illegitimate children. Cosmo was satisfied with being Head of the Republic and Father of his Country, but the bastard Alexander must needs be a Duke. How Florence felt towards her second Medicean Pope is shown by her anxiety, even in her last agony, to fall into the hands of the Emperor, in whose breast it was just possible that some remains of justice or mercy might still linger—not into the hands of the Pontiff, with whom she well knew that all was hopeless.

During the second banishment of the Medici, that which accompanied the coming of Charles the Eighth into Italy, the chief interest of Florentine history centres for several years round the person of Savonarola. To the great Friar Mr. Trollope hardly does justice; he tries to do him justice, but he does not fully succeed. Mr. Trollope's whole turn of mind is so thoroughly alien from the whole class to which Savonarola belongs, his ideas of things, animated as they are by a keen sense of right and wrong, are still so thoroughly modern and, so to speak, so unspiritual, that he can hardly throw himself into the position which is required for the full appreciation of a political prophet. Mr. Trollope hates Popes, and Savonarola manfully withstood the worst of the Popes. But one who withstood a Pope, neither as a Ghibelin nor as a Protestant, but as himself a heaven-sent teacher, is, to a writer who looks at things with Mr. Trollope's eyes, hardly better than a Pope himself. Savonarola happened to take the right side, and Hildebrand happened to take the wrong side, but they both start from the same equally obnoxious principle. Mr. Trollope, in discussing the question whether Savonarola ever mingled any element of imposture with his enthusiasm, thus expresses himself:—

There is another consideration, which should be borne in mind by those who rely, in endeavouring to estimate and understand the strangely complex character of Savonarola, on the incompatibility of such habitual communion of the soul with God, and such a fervid faith in Him as the Friar possessed, with the self-conscious falsity of the charlatan. It is that the moral effect of such communion and such faith will be characterized by the nature of the conception which the creature has been able to form for himself of the Creator. Now the God of Savonarola's worship was a God who was expected to consign Pisa to Florentine domination, as a reward for the piety of the Florentines, if indeed they would be tempted by it to be pious;—who was thought to have punished a Pope for publishing an unjust excommunication by causing the death of his son, who would otherwise have lived longer;—and who might be expected to strike down into hell by sudden fire a preacher who should not preach in accordance with the Divine Will. The question arises, how far intimate and worshipping communion of the soul with a God so figured forth would be likely to produce that noble and lofty spirit of truthfulness, to which the baleful shadow of a falsehood, let it appear to subserve whatever interest of piety or virtue it may, is an abomination and an impossibility.

Now it is quite possible that Savonarola, like many others, may not have been quite above the temptation to pious frauds; it may be that, starting with pure enthusiasm, he may have gradually come to corrupt his enthusiasm with a certain leaven, if not of imposture, at least of untruthfulness. We are by no means convinced that such was the case; yet it may well have been so. But Mr. Trollope's argument is a very dangerous one, and one which may easily be made to prove too much. His last two objections are simply theological. Savonarola believed in special interpositions, in temporal judgments, in actual miracles; Mr. Trollope does not. That is to say, supposing Mr. Trollope to be at least a theist, Savonarola and Mr. Trollope differ as to the nature of the instruments by which the divine government is carried on. But we can see nothing immoral, nothing gendering untruthfulness, in either view. And the creed of Savonarola on this head was not only the universal creed of his own age, but it has been, in one form or another, the creed of the vast majority of devout persons of all creeds and in all ages. If such a belief is ground for suspicion of untruthfulness, a great many other people are in danger besides Savonarola. As for Pisa, Mr. Trollope looks at the matter from his own political standard—a much higher and truer standard than that of Savonarola, but one to which he has no right to expect Savonarola to attain. As we have seen, no one in Florence doubted the justice of the struggle to recover Pisa. Nobody but the Pisans, or those whom accident threw into the Pisan cause, would have thought of charging the Florentines with abstract injustice in the matter. All nations assume their wars to be just; they pray to God for victory, and they return thanks to God when they get it. But the enemy, and not only the enemy, but neutrals at the time and impartial posterity afterwards, see through the mistake, and condemn the impious blindness. Yet the enemy does just the same on his own side, and both neutrals and impartial posterity are equally ready to do the same as soon as their own interests may happen to be touched. To expect that God would interfere to restore Pisa to Florence really involves no principle beyond that which we assume when we pray for success in a war with

Russia or in the suppression of an Indian mutiny—the Russian or the Sepoy praying all the while with equal fervency after his own fashion for an opposite result. We will not plunge into the theology or the philosophy of the matter; only we do not admit that such a belief, especially at a time when it was absolutely universal, was at all likely to lessen a man's sense of honesty and truthfulness.

Over the last struggle of Florence, after the third expulsion, Mr. Trollope strikes us as rather hurrying. But he brings out in the most striking colours the nature of the enemy with whom Florence had to deal in the second Medicean Pope. With the fall of Florence Mr. Trollope ends his history. And indeed the fall of Florence is one of the great dates in the history of the world. It was practically the end of republican freedom in Italy; it was the end of republican freedom, on any great scale, throughout Europe. Sienna had yet to be formally annexed in order to enlarge the Duchy of Florence into the Grand Duchy of Tuscany; the aristocracies of Genoa and Lucca still survived; Venice still retained both her independence and considerable remains of her greatness; but her greatness is no longer the greatness of an Italian power, it is that of "Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomites." The Swiss and German commonwealths survived also; but with the fall of Florence we reach the end of anything like a system of independent commonwealths as an important element in European politics. As such we feel that we have reached the end of an important element of mediæval history, the element which more than any other connects it with classical history. And the other tie between the two is snapped at the same time. The coronation of the last Roman Emperor and Italian King took place while the siege of Florence was actually going on. With the fall of the last really free Italian city, with the coronation of the last full Emperor, we feel that a whole world of ideas is left behind; with the year 1530-1 we pass in short from the mediæval into the modern world.

We have spoken of Mr. Trollope's good manner and of his bad. Of the former we nowhere find a higher specimen than in his description of the deathbed of Lorenzo. The scene is indeed one of the most striking in history. The dying tyrant, awakening to the memory of his crimes, finds his flatterers, his poets, his philosophers, all useless; and his hireling priests serve his turn no better. As the last resource for his conscience, he sends for the stern prophet of righteousness, and Savonarola stands by the side of Lorenzo as the Baptist might have stood by the side of Herod:—

Fra Girolamo was sent for in all haste to come out to Carreggi. At first the Friar, astonished at such a demand from such a quarter, hesitated to comply with it, fearing that there was no chance that what he could say would be favourably listened to by Lorenzo. But when he was made to understand the condition to which the destroyer of his country's liberties was reduced, and how urgent was his need of spiritual aid, Savonarola immediately set forth on his way to Carreggi.

The interview that followed between these two men, Lorenzo the Magnificent, the usurping destroyer of Florentine liberty, the philosophic sceptic, the licentious poet, the recklessly profligate man of pleasure, the fraudulent banker, the unscrupulous betrayer of the most sacred trusts, then on his dying bed, and the stern friar, whose only worldly thought or interest was a passionate love for that liberty of which the other was the sworn foe, to whose every sentiment, feeling, principle, habitude, the sworn life and conduct of Lorenzo was inexpressibly hateful and revolting—the interview between these two men, I say, was one of the most remarkable that history has recorded.

Lorenzo makes his confession—

The dying man, turning to the spiritual guide he had called to him in his need, said that there were three things that lay heavily on his soul, and for the guilt of which he would fain be assured of pardon:—the merciless sack of Volterra; the appropriation to his own purposes of the funds destined for the marriage portions of the daughters of the citizens; and lastly, the shedding of so much innocent blood, and the ruin of so many innocent victims after the conspiracy of the Pazzi.

Lorenzo, like Herod, hears the prophet gladly and will do many things at his bidding; but the one darling sin in either case is too dear to be given up. Lorenzo repents, he believes, he brings himself by an effort to make restitution for the private wrongs which he has done. But at the last trial he fails:—

"And lastly," resumed the Friar, while his voice and manner grew more sternly solemn, "you must restore to the Commonwealth of Florence the liberty of which you have deprived it."

Having spoken thus, Savonarola remained bent forward towards his penitent, with his eyes intently fixed on his face, while waiting with intense anxiety for his answer.

But he had asked more than a Medici, even on his death-bed, could grant. He could not—no, though the price were his eternal welfare—he could not consent to undo that fabric of family greatness which he and his forefathers had for generations been labouring and plotting to build up. So Lorenzo, for all reply to the Friar's words, turned his face dismally away without answering a word. And so Savonarola left him, returning to Florence, without having pronounced the absolute demanded from him.

Mr. Trollope, in his whole narrative, in his whole comments on this scene, and in many other passages of his history, fully rises to the greatness of his subject. It seems hardly credible that a man who can write as he can and does write, when he chooses, should wilfully turn round and disfigure his pages with such stuff as the following:—

On the 17th of March, 1516, Giuliano, the younger brother of his Holiness, died. It was a severe blow—a shock to the fabric of the Medicean greatness, but not a fatal one. It was unfortunate that he left no heir—no legitimate heir, that is to say. He did leave a son, Ippolito, born in 1511, every inch a Medici, let who might be the mother. And for illegitimate . . . Bah! with a Pope for his uncle . . . !

Unfortunate, though, this untimely death of Giuliano certainly was, for it was by him that we were connected with the royal house of France; a connection of which we so lately saw the important advantages. But this too may in some degree be remedied. There is his grace the Duke of Urbino to be married—rather a more graceless grace than could be wished perhaps—but that is all the greater reason for getting him married. He shall go to France for a wife. We may not hope to find at a moment's notice so near a connection with the French crown as fortune ("Providence," we mean; are they not the thoughts of a Pope that we are putting into words?) provided for us in the former instance. But there is the noble lady, Maddalena, daughter of Jean de la Tour d'Auvergne et de Boulogne, and of Jeanne de Bourbon. She will do; and surely may be had for the Pope's nephew, sovereign Duke of Urbino. Let his grace set forth for France to bring home his bride. We, the Florentine Pope, with our Providence, and the Florentine Cardinals, with our superintendence, and the Florentine citizens, with our purse, and the Florentine artisans, with our labour; we will take care that our Lorenzo goes for his bride with such a following at his back, and such a pomp as might shame that of a king.

Not fit to travel, our gallant gay Lorenzo! Still less fit to ride in the pageant tournaments given in honour of his espousal! Least fit of all to marry! What prate of vulgar leeches is this? Physical laws! What is this of new and horrible forms of malady unknown to former generations? Youthful excesses! It would be odd if unlimited use of absolutions, dispensations, indulgences, would not put all such matters right.

We take leave of a very unequal work, but one whose merits greatly outweigh its defects. Had Mr. Trollope never aspired to be a popular writer, had he given himself to a wide and a more systematic study of general history, he might have won no mean place among historical writers. As it is, he just hovers on the brink of the promised land, without ever crossing the border.

NOVELS FOR FAMILY READING.*

DOCTORS tell us that the prevalent type of disease from which the present generation suffers is quite different from that which afflicted our fathers and grandfathers. Punch and port wine have done their work, and we bear the penalty of past ancestral joviality in the shape of an exaggeration of nervous sensibility and all its attendant miseries. Gout and fevers have gone out, and headaches and dyspepsia have come in. In fact, had not volunteering been invented, and cricketing come to be regarded as a branch of the *litteræ humaniores*, there is no saying to what a degree of morbid sensitiveness and incurable indigestion the whole nation might have been by this time reduced. But this is not all the change that is going on. As we are unlike our progenitors in bodily constitution, so must we expect our posterity to be unlike ourselves in the type of their minds. The next generation of Englishmen and Englishwomen will exhibit to the world the unprecedented phenomenon of a people brought up mainly upon novels. Half a century has wrought a development of the theory of fiction-making for the young at which our own worthy fathers and mothers would have stood amazed, if not absolutely aghast. Let any man of fifty or sixty recall the amount of story-reading and *bonâ fide* novel-reading which was permitted to himself when he was a boy, and the change will strike him at once as wonderful. In those days it was universally held that much fiction was a most unwholesome thing for the young mind, and according to the national belief such was the national practice. Very few stories for children were in existence, and those were usually of the most carefully devised and highly proper description. Think only of the names of the books and the writers who were supposed to satisfy all our young aspirations after "the good, the beautiful, and the true." Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Trimmer, Mrs. Barbauld, Lucy Aikin, Mr. Day (the author of *Sandford and Merton*), were our novelists. Exquisitely exciting periodicals like the *Mirror* or the *Bee*, with an occasional *Keepsake* or *Gem*, and, in more indulgent families, a *Gulliver* (unexpurgated), the *Arabian Nights* (unexpurgated), and *Don Quixote* (also unexpurgated), with, of course, *Robinson Crusoe*, and (perhaps) the *Tales of the Genii*, and *Rasselas*, and Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*—these constituted the bulk of the books for the young, with which we were perfectly contented. Now all is changed. Not only is every bookseller's shop deluged with stories for boys and stories for girls, but periodicals for the young are supplied, with every sort of illustration and at every variety of price. Besides this, the whole national notion as to novel-reading is modified. Unless there is something flagrantly offensive to propriety, and the plot turns upon the infraction of one particular commandment, the real novel, with all its full-blown love-making, is regarded as wholesome reading for girls and boys in almost unlimited quantities. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that, for one book of fiction, of some sort or other, that was read by each girl or boy at the beginning of the century, fifty are now read by each one of our children.

A still more striking and suggestive thing is the position that novels have established for themselves in the various periodicals of what we must call the religious world. The publication of magazines for the propagation of some theological school by the aid of stories and tales is, when one comes to think of it, a phenomenon almost startling, from the rapidity with which it has grown to its present maturity. The ingenuous youth of to-day are to be seduced into the paths of virtue on the high-pressure system which now pervades all English life. The single or two-volume stories of the established religious tale-writer do not come fast enough for the children of a generation that has the *Times*

* *Alfred Hagart's Household*. By Alexander Smith. London: Alexander Strahan.

of the day on its breakfast-tables at Brighton, and telegraphs a Queen's Speech to Paris with such haste that it arrives about ten minutes after the last words have been spoken in the House of Lords. A union between piety and periodicalism has become a recognised "means of grace," even among the lowest of Low Churchmen, and the most sabbatarian of Sabbatarians. Non-conformity itself relaxes into a grim smile, the Religious Tract Society provides its Sunday stories, and in the same sheet which offers "words in season," "hints to the unconverted," and "daily texts," the youthful Congregationalist and Baptist learns how to combine flirting and chapel-going on the soundest possible of Scriptural principles. *Good Words*, the periodical from which this story of *Alfred Hagart's Household* has been republished—though the fact is nowhere stated in the republication itself—is in itself a phenomenon. It is the first distinct attempt of the Broad Church school to make its voice heard in the parsonages and quiet homes of universal Great Britain. Its Broad Churchism is, of course, of the mildest description. Edited by a shrewd and accomplished Presbyterian minister, it was not to be expected that it would too heedlessly shock the prejudices of the orthodox, whether north or south of the Tweed. Dr. Macleod's chief assistants belong, indeed, to the English Establishment, and this fact alone is sufficient to suggest the tone and principles of the publication. And, in reality, it is by the combination of writers differing widely from one another as to their tastes, habits of thought, and actual dogmatical beliefs, that this singular periodical propagates religious liberalism. The editor and his staff have just attained to that early and half-developed form of Broad Church thought which aims at the creation of charitable views towards antagonists in general. As for the distinct liberalism of Stanley, Jowett, and Colenso, they know it not; and in truth, if they did know it, their periodical could never have seen the light. Nevertheless, it is difficult to conclude that *Good Words* is not playing the part of a pioneer. A household that habitually reads a magazine wherein one clerical writer records the unrivalled influences of Assisi and the Evangelical piety of the founder of the Franciscans, while another tells how he coquetted with Greek priests and Archimandrites in Montenegro, and a third (a Dean) wanders among French churches, combining admiration for their architecture with zeal against Mariolatry—such a household must surely become habituated to the idea that Christianity is something different from a belief in patristic creeds or mediæval hymns or Thirty-nine Articles of British origin. Nobody who is accustomed to see Mr. Charles Kingsley's name associated with those of a host of more orthodox divines can continue to cherish the dear delightful old theory that "the Gospel is the good news of eternal damnation to everybody except one's self," even though Mr. Kingsley himself is more bitter than ever against the fellow-religionists of Dr. Newman, and a Dr. Brown (a Scotch gentleman) denounces Papists, Puseyites, and Rationalists as the legitimate successors of the Pharisees, the Essenes, and the Sadducees of ancient times.

And on just such universalist principles the editor of *Good Words* administers his fiction to his believing readers. Of course he can usher nothing "improper" into the world. Not a suspicion of bigamy, or of the doings of French actresses, or of runaway marriages, must be detected either in the verse or prose which he stamps with his *imprimatur*. But, short of this, every taste shall be gratified. During the past year he has given to the world two novels as utterly unlike in style, tone, and substance, as it is possible to conceive. If the rational and non-theological novel-reader finds neither of them to his liking, this is not because they are both of them of the kind one would look for in such a quarter. To those who think Mr. Kingsley a master of the craft of story-telling, and are ready to sit at his feet when he teaches history, *Hereward*, the *Last of the English*, may appear as something less extravagant, noisy, and tedious than we have found it, so far as we have been able to surmount its difficulties. As an historical picture, it appears to be about as accurate as its author's remark that "all true men" love women "with an overwhelming adoration" is profoundly true. *Alfred Hagart's Household* is altogether in a different line. If Mr. Kingsley is truculent, and the talk of his characters fiery and fierce, Mr. Alexander Smith's personages are all of the "goody" kind. His tale is just the description of story that the simple-minded reader would have looked for in a magazine bearing the ominous title of *Good Words*. The plot is imperceptibly small; the reflections are highly appropriate and generally untrue. Mr. Hagart, and Mrs. Hagart, and the young Hagarts, and an old relation, "Miss Kate," and all their friends, acquaintances, and relations in general, whether laudable or the reverse in their conduct, talk that small and smartish talk which is in favour with the imitators of Mr. Dickens. Then, by way of giving life to the tale, the author is perpetually introducing himself, after the way of Thackeray and Mr. Anthony Trollope—a practice disagreeable enough in the hands of a master of the craft, but in Mr. Smith utterly intolerable. It is, however, by his more eloquent outbreaks that Mr. Smith would probably have us judge him. Let us hear him, then, in the person of a gifted youth whose love-making is introduced towards the end of the story, as he strides up and down an "apartment" in his own house, "his mind filled with austere music" in consequence of reading *Samson Agonistes*. "The reading of Milton always humiliates me," he silently observes to himself—

What immeasurable altitude and solitariness of soul! What cruel purity and coldness as of Alpine snows! Chaucer gossips, Spenser dreams, Shakespeare is mobile as flame, now clown, now emperor; now Caliban, now Ariel; at home everywhere, taking his ease in every condition of life—but Milton is never other than himself; he is always autocratic—the haughtiest, scornfullest, stateliest, loneliest of human spirits. He daunts, repels, frightens, yet fascinates. He would sing the song of Paradise, and he left the task to the close of life, when smitten with blindness, pierced with ingratitudo, and fallen on evil days and evil tongues—perfectly conscious that he could become immortal whenever he pleased. Gracious Heaven, what a will the blind old man had, making time, infirmity, and sorrow his slaves! Other poets are summer yachts, moving hither and thither on the impulse of the summer wind; Milton is an ocean steamer, with steadfast-pointing needle, plenty of coal on board, and which, relying on internal resources, and careless alike of elemental aids or hindrances, bears straight on its determined way, deviating not hair's-breadth, come hurricane, come calm. What power, what energy in everything he does! His lines are like the charging files of Cromwell's Ironsides.

Then the unspoken meditation takes another turn, and the critic asks what he himself is to be considered when compared with Milton, deciding in favour of the view that he is "a spineless caterpillar," "a blown arrow of thistle-down," "a poltroon," and "a fool." With this last judicious sentiment we may leave him, assuring the reader who may be disposed to serve *Alfred Hagart's Household* as this young gentleman served *Samson Agonistes*, and dash the book upon the ground, but not in an ecstasy of admiration, that if he will but read on for a few more pages he will learn how to make love in the same eloquent style, and will find Mr. Henry Willoughby calling himself a great many more ugly names, in whose applicability he will cordially agree.

Such are the household novels of *Good Words*. That they will stimulate the prevailing appetite for novel-reading can scarcely be supposed. One is almost tempted to imagine that they are designed with malice prepense to serve the very opposite end. No one can surely ever find that "*l'appétit vient en mangeant*," after feasting on such delicacies as Mr. Kingsley's very peppery stew and Mr. Smith's very watery gruel. Let us hope, in consideration for the mothers and daughters and maiden aunts of England, for whom *Good Words* provides their only literary recreation, that the new story, now commenced by the accomplished author of the *Chronicles of Carlingford*, may prove a pleasanter kind of refection.

SOCIAL LIFE OF THE CHINESE.*

IT is a strange and rather humiliating reflection, that so enormous a proportion of the world we live in is to most of us a sealed book. We boast of the spread of education, and fancy ourselves greatly wiser than our fathers, but even to this day nine men out of ten have no conception whatever of the inner life of any nation but their own. Free-trade and steam-travelling have done something towards giving us a better understanding of our neighbours, but it is only within the last few years that the average Englishman has ceased to believe that frogs form the staple diet of Frenchmen; while the average Frenchman is still more than half-persuaded that the Anglophobic utterances of M. Assolant and the Marquis de Boissy have at least a foundation in fact. The book before us supplies a large quantity of minute and valuable information concerning a country of high commercial and national importance, and as to which the amount of popular information is even more than ordinarily scanty. The name of China suggests to most people little more than a confused idea of tea and chopsticks, pigtails and willow-pattern plates. Mr. Doolittle aspires to give us a truer notion of that great country. Having for fourteen years been a member of the American Mission at Fuhchau, he speaks with the authority of an eye-witness, and the minuteness of detail which his work exhibits will to most readers go far to establish its trustworthiness. It is natural to conclude that an author who has expended so much patient labour upon the collection of his materials is likely to have been equally careful in verifying his statements. He cautions us at the outset that his opportunities for personal observation have been mainly confined to the Fuhchau district, though the greater part of the manners and customs which he describes are probably practised more or less throughout the Empire. If all travellers exercised a like discretion in qualifying their statements, there would be less conflict of evidence in relation to distant countries.

The characteristic of the Chinese which most forcibly strikes an English reader is their intense and indiscriminating reverence for established custom. Ourselves a progressive people, we find it hard to realize the idea of a nation who absolutely live by tradition, turning neither to the right nor to the left from the ways in which their fathers walked a thousand years before them. What destiny is to the Turk, custom is to the Chinaman. Mr. Doolittle tells us, in reference to an absurd custom of carrying a white cock on the coffin at a funeral:—

They are remarkably fond of accounting for their established customs by saying that "anciently people did so and so, and we nowadays imitate their example." They seem to think that this is a most satisfactory reason why they should do as they are in the habit of doing. They admit readily that there is no more reasonable or satisfactory explanation which can be given for the observance of this custom than that their forefathers observed it before them, and that they have been taught to observe it. They seem not to care about investigating into the origin of their superstitions, nor do they leave them off when they fail to discern any connection between the

* *Social Life of the Chinese*. By the Rev. Justus Doolittle. 2 vols. London : Sampson Low, Son, & Marston. 1866.

desired object and the means they have been in the habit of employing to attain it. They will readily confess the absurdity of many customs, and even the utter impossibility of obtaining the object which they wish to obtain by the customary means; but, on the next occasion, they will perform with the greatest outward decorum and apparent sincerity what they have previously derided, and pronounced irrational and useless.

From the Chinaman's cradle to his grave he is the victim of forms and ceremonies. Before he is twelve months old he has gone through enough in this way to last any Western barbarian a lifetime. On his first birthday he is made to tell his own fortune, in a mode which we transcribe for the benefit of any British materfamilias who may have a faney to practise a little bit of divination on her own account:—

A large bamboo sieve, such as farmers use in winnowing grain, is placed on a table before the ancestral tablets of the family, where incense and candles are already burning. On this are laid a set of money-scales, a foot measure, a brass mirror, pencil, ink, paper, and ink slab, one or two books, the abacus, a silver or a gold ornament or implement, and fruits, &c. The child, dressed in the new garments just presented, is placed upon the sieve in the midst of the articles upon it. The object now is to see what it will first take hold of and play with. The moment is one of great interest to the parents and assembled friends. It is said that the article or articles the child first takes up indicate its future employment, character, or condition in the world. If the child be a boy, and he takes a book or an implement connected with literature, as pen or ink, it is surmised that he will become a distinguished scholar; if he seizes the money-scales, or the silver or gold instrument or ornament, that he will become famous for his wealth, and for his talents in making money.

In the Sung dynasty, a certain lad, on the day when he was one year old, while seated on the sieve, first seized hold of two miniature military weapons in one hand, and in the other two vessels like those used in sacrificial ceremonies on some state occasions. After a few moments he laid these articles down and took up a seal. After this he paid no attention to the other playthings before him. Now mark the result: this lad became a Chancellor of the Empire!

We notice many points of resemblance between the social customs of China and those of Hindostan. Among them we may instance the practice of *suttee*, happily now becoming of rare occurrence in India. Chinese *suttee* differs somewhat from the Indian practice, inasmuch as it is never performed by burning. Some of the victims take opium, and lie down and die by the side of the deceased husband; others starve or drown themselves, or destroy themselves by poison. The favourite mode, however, appears to be by hanging in public, after due notice given, that all who choose may come and see the spectacle. The author tells us that it was formerly customary at Fuhchau for the dignitaries of the place to be present on such occasions; but the practice is now discontinued by reason of the improper conduct of a certain widow, who, having gone through the preliminary part of the ceremony, thought better of the matter, and, having retired upon a frivolous excuse, forgot to come back again. The assembled mandarins waited patiently for some time, but at last realizing the truth, were justly indignant, and have not patronized such a performance since.

Learning is greatly valued in China, and distinction in this respect is, we are told, the natural stepping-stone to official preferment. The extent of a man's literary attainments is measured by competitive examinations, which take place at fixed intervals, and are regulated by a carefully organized system. There are three degrees attainable by the student—those of *Sextsai*, *Kujin*, and *Chantsz*, answering in some respects to our A.B., A.M., and LL.D. Those who attain the last or highest degree are very greatly esteemed, and may always obtain official employment if they desire it. Graduates of the lower degrees may also obtain office, but from them a considerable money payment to the Imperial treasury is expected before they are inducted into any important post. The system upon which the examinations are conducted seems quite as complete as anything of the kind in Western lands, and the precautions against the use of unfair means by the candidates are wonderfully minute, though we are informed that they are sometimes evaded. Bribery will effect anything in China, and is indeed a recognised institution in the whole social life of the nation. By its means, if only the douceur be large enough, even the safeguards of the examination-hall may be broken down, or the goodwill of the examiner purchased for a wealthy candidate. The subjects of study are, to an English mind, somewhat peculiar. Mathematics, geography, and the natural sciences are utterly disregarded, and are replaced by what are called the Chinese classics, consisting mainly of the writings of Confucius and Mencius. All the examinations are conducted upon the same plan. A given number of subjects, taken from the writings of the above-named authors, are proposed, and upon these the candidates have to write original essays or themes in prose and verse. One singular practice connected with the degrees is worthy of a passing mention:—

Should an undergraduate be able to attend the examinations regularly till he becomes eighty years old without attaining the coveted rank of bachelorship, the Emperor, on being informed of the honourable fact by the provincial governor, confers upon the aged competitor the titles and privileges of a graduate. It becomes the duty of the governor to report such cases, and to ask for them the customary token of approval on the part of the Emperor. On the receipt of the title, the old man procures the golden button, which he wears as a badge of Imperial respect. The bestowal of the title on the octogenarian is designed as a testimony of the approbation of the Emperor, who would encourage the pursuit of letters even to extreme old age.

This passage gives us a very terrible idea of Chinese perseverance. There is something very touching in the picture of a middle-aged gentleman going up, year after year, for his examination; "plucked again" each time, but sustained by the

cheering reflection that another thirty years or so, if he lives so long, will entitle him to the honorary gilt button. Jacob serving his fourteen years for a wife sinks into insignificance beside the Chinaman toiling half a century for his B.A. degree. Mr. Doolittle tells us in another passage that the Chinese have very little dread of death, but it must be intensely aggravating, even to the most philosophical Celestial, to die at seventy-nine under such circumstances.

The author gives us a minute and interesting account of the religious ceremonies of the Chinese, and in particular of various ceremonies performed for the benefit of the departed. Not the least singular of these is one designed to shield the deceased from any calamity which might befall him as a punishment for having in any way used too much water in this world, or for having used it in an improper manner. Such a course is supposed to offend the God of Water, who accordingly visits the culprit with his wrath in the other world. A peculiar kind of expiatory ceremony is performed for the express purpose of averting evil arising from this cause. It is naturally to be presumed that there are very few teetotalers. The total abstainer, rather than the publican, is the sinner in the Celestial Empire. Probably, however, the objection to the excessive use of water applies only in its elementary condition. In the modified form of tea, it is imbibed at all hours, without any apparent fear of the anger of the gods. It must not, however, be supposed that the "cup which cheers but not inebriates" is the only beverage accessible to the Chinaman. There is a beverage called *sanshi*, a kind of whisky made from potatoes, millet, or rice, which is used upon festive occasions. The favourite stimulant, however, is opium, and the chapter devoted to this drug and its use is by no means the least interesting in the book. The enthralling influence of the habit of opium-smoking, and its baneful effects upon the bodily and mental health of the victim, are depicted in vivid colours. Mr. Doolittle declares that the evils attendant on this vice are infinitely greater than those produced by the excessive use of ardent spirits.

The chapter entitled "Female Infanticide" will be read with considerable interest. Many writers have ventured to question, or even altogether to deny, the existence of the custom in China, and the testimony therefore of a gentleman who has resided there for fourteen years is worthy of some attention. Mr. Doolittle quotes facts which appear to prove conclusively that, at least in the Fuhchau district, the destruction of female infants is very extensively practised. The children so destroyed are not, as is usually the case with us, the offspring of illegitimate connections, but are generally born in lawful wedlock, and put out of the way merely because the parents wish to avoid the trouble and expense of rearing them.

Mr. Doolittle's book makes no pretence to high literary merit, but his style is clear and business-like, which in a work of this character is the most important consideration. We cannot help regretting, by the way, that his modesty has kept his own personality so completely in the background. A little more egotism would have been an immense improvement. During the long period of his residence in China he must constantly have been brought into personal contact with the manners and customs which he describes. With one or two trifling exceptions, however, he studiously avoids any reference to his own experiences. The effect is that his descriptions are hard and cold, where they might have been brightened with the colours of reality. The author has, however, stamped his individuality upon the book in a less pleasant fashion by means of certain peculiarities of orthography. Such words as "plow," "pretense," "self-defense," "worshiping," and "traveler" may possibly be good American or good Chinese, but they are certainly not English. We may add that the work is professedly written from the missionary point of view, though it is by no means strongly tinged with the missionary cast of thought. The incidental moral reflections and allusions to missionary topics have rather an unnatural and transplanted appearance, as if they had been dabbled in at intervals after the rest of the work had been completed. This, indeed, may very possibly be the case, as the greater part of the work first appeared in the columns of a Hong Kong newspaper, where such allusions would probably have been considered out of place. Though, however, we may fairly take exception to some of the passages we have mentioned as not always, in a literary sense, quite in harmony with the context, we readily assent to the proposition which they are intended to lay down—namely, that there is in China a great field for missionary enterprise. Increasing intercourse and more intimate commercial relations with that important country are, day by day, paving the way for a more enlightened civilization, and affording freer scope for missionary work; and although the Chinese now "sit in darkness," their earnest reverence for their poor pagan learning shows that they value gleams of light.

STUDIES IN PARLIAMENT.*

IT has been said, with very little accuracy, that history means nothing but the lives of its great men. It is true, however, that it gains most of its popular interest when considered as a collection of biographies. And, in a similar way, the study of politics means,

* *Studies in Parliament*. By R. H. Hutton. London: Longmans & Co. 1866.

to a large number of people, the study of politicians. Lord Palmerston managed to make his personal qualities, rather than his political creed, a party centre of attraction to an exceptional extent; but there are many people who will always worship a concrete Lord Derby or Mr. Bright rather than the abstract ideas of Conservatism or Democracy. The "studies" which Mr. Hutton has published are intended to satisfy the very legitimate curiosity which results from this way of regarding politics; not, indeed, that the most philosophical thinkers may not also descend to take an interest in the instruments by which their theories must be worked out in practice. We say the legitimate curiosity, for Mr. Hutton has evidently taken no pains to gratify the tastes of those students of statesmen from the valet point of view who are anxious to know what pattern Mr. Gladstone prefers for his waist-coats, and who is Mr. Disraeli's hatter. Details on such interesting topics may be found profusely scattered through the columns contributed by "loungers" and "idle" and "twaddlers" to some of the daily papers. It is impossible to define with accuracy the exact boundaries of fair criticism, and to divide the topics which are fair matter of public treatment from those which cannot be handled without a want of delicacy. Perhaps some few remarks in the volume before us may be considered open to objection. On the whole, however, Mr. Hutton may be considered to have kept very skilfully within bounds. Yet his book will not, on that account, be the more agreeable to the statesmen criticized; for, on the whole, it must be more annoying to be told that you are incapable of learning by experience than, for example, that you don't know how to shave. One of these qualities is, however, a fair subject of remark, whilst the other could not be touched upon without impertinence. And Mr. Hutton always writes with the instinct of a gentleman, whose trespasses upon forbidden ground, if any, are obviously mere oversights.

Mr. Hutton's volume includes sketches of fifteen living statesmen, besides Lord Palmerston and Mr. Cobden, which have appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* during the past year. They are attempts at the difficult form of art which may be called the miniature-painting of literature. In novels we are very often told that the characters should not be explicitly described, but should be left as much as possible to develop themselves in action. In histories, on the other hand, we like to have a compact summary of a man's character, which should approach as nearly as possible to the brevity of a chemical formula. There are few feats that are more difficult to perform effectively. After all the descriptions that have been given of physiognomy, we always feel that half a dozen strokes with a pencil would give us a far more vivid idea of the reality; and from the most painful analysis of a man's character we often learn much less than from talking to him personally for five minutes. The truth is that no language is delicate enough to discriminate among the thousand and one varieties of shape and form that every feature of face or mind may take. Shakespeare himself would not have been able to give us a notion of the shape of Queen Elizabeth's nose half so distinct as that which we get from the rudest engraving; and no language of Shakespeare or any one else could make evident to us the characteristic difference between the humours of Jaques and Hamlet and Falstaff, which we perceive in an instant when we read their own words. Hence it follows that, when a character is the arbitrary production of the writer, we infinitely prefer the picture which we construct from recorded words and actions to any deliberate attempt at dissecting out its constituent elements; and if the conceptions of different readers vary from each other, it does not much matter. The man who thinks of Hamlet as really a little mad may admire the character as much as the man who thinks him perfectly sane. If, however, Hamlet had been a real prince, the question would have been one of profound interest. Thus, though we cannot really approach at all nearly to constructing, by a series of formulas, a very vivid picture of a man's character, the rough outlines which we can draw are enough to determine points of the highest interest. Whether Lord Stanley is incapable, as Mr. Hutton thinks, of ever ruling—whether Mr. Bright is or is not sincere in his democracy—might at any moment be matters of great practical importance; and such problems may be discussed without requiring portraiture of impracticable refinement.

Every one is furnished already with some pet theory about Mr. Bright and Lord Stanley, and although it would be almost impossible to communicate them to a person previously ignorant by a set description, we can easily compare the facility with which rival theories will fit into the recorded actions of the men themselves. Mr. Hutton has made very careful studies of our leading men for some years, and the opinion which he expresses should have its due weight with any one who wishes to calculate their future from their past orbits. A man who can quote familiarly Lord Russell's volume of essays published in 1821, who can refer with equal facility to Lord Grey's despatches upon New Zealand, and to what Lord Palmerston said about Irish emigration in 1823, has evidently taken some trouble to qualify himself for the office of critic. Moreover, he shows as much impartiality as we can expect a man to show upon political subjects. Few people can have taken so keen an interest in politics as Mr. Hutton has evidently taken for many years, without contracting some good healthy prejudices. A man who was cold-blooded enough to look with equal judicial impartiality upon Lord Derby and Mr. Bright would hardly have warm enough sympathies duly to appreciate the good qualities

of either. We can hardly demand from a writer that he should place himself at some point equidistant from these different political poles. We must be content if he speaks like an honourable enemy of those who are most opposed to him. Mr. Hutton deserves this praise; he evidently means to be fair, and never shuts his eyes to the good qualities of an antagonist, though perhaps a stain would look black in a Tory which would at worst be grey in a Liberal. It is not difficult to define his own position by observing his relation to those he criticizes. He speaks with most aversion of Mr. Disraeli, calling him a "viewy" man, speaking of his "rootlessness of character," and nicknaming him the "flash Toby Crackit of intellectual politics." These epithets may perhaps be pointed and well deserved, but they conclusively show that Mr. Hutton is not a good Tory. He speaks with far more sympathy of Mr. Cobden in a paper which was no doubt softened by the fact of its publication on the day of his funeral; and he is warmed to genuine enthusiasm in speaking of his fine oratorical taste, his "real imaginative power," his mind "as luminous in its expressiveness, as sensitive to criticism, and as full of the scrupulous nobility of pure intellectual interests, as any poet's." His utilitarianism is condemned, but condemned gently, as "the delicate utilitarianism of a mind possessed by one class of truths." And we are told that, had he not been "as it were the optic nerve of English commerce, he could not have made a subject unusually cold and barren seem with life." From this we may infer that Mr. Hutton has, at any rate, not so much hostility to the Manchester school as to cause him to speak grudgingly of its merits. Amongst living statesmen, those of whom he writes with most warmth are Mr. W. E. Forster and Mr. Stansfeld, partly, no doubt, because neither of their careers has been long enough to give much hold for criticism. Mr. Stansfeld's connection with Mazzini has, in Mr. Hutton's opinion, exercised a favourable influence upon his prospects. Mr. Hutton is evidently a Liberal, but not of the ordinary Radical type. Perhaps, if his Liberalism is not so crude, it is also not quite so robust; there is a vein of sentimentality running through it which corresponds to a rather affected, though practised, style of writing. If we might draw a character of Mr. Hutton from the materials before us, as he has drawn the characters of the various statesmen described in his pages, we should say that he is a man of much acuteness, much polish, and very considerable political information; that he is, moreover, candid, and free from all petty bigotry; but that, on the other hand, he is quicker at catching superficial aspects of character than in penetrating very deeply below the surface, and that he aims at being picturesque in his descriptions rather than at being really profound.

His sketches, as he modestly says, "do not profess to be individually exhaustive of their subjects. They are for the most part opinions not hastily formed, but of course formed without any advantages except of an outside though interested observer of the political world." We should not, therefore, fairly complain of them for not showing us a character from all points of view. But they are sometimes unsatisfactory in the incompleteness with which the author presents to us even those aspects upon which he chooses to dwell. He is very fond of using metaphors, not by way of enforcing and illustrating positive statements, but as a substitute for them; they are frequently appropriate enough, but occasionally they leave an uncomfortable impression of vagueness, as if the writer had not thoroughly defined his thought to his own mind. We do not, for example, understand very plainly what he means by saying that Lord Cranborne "almost always speaks as if his mind were fitted with a false bottom, a good deal nearer the surface than the springs of his thought," and that "his arguments, therefore, ring hollow, as coming only from the superficial stratum of his critical vigilance, &c." Shakespeare talks about the mind's eye, but the mind's false bottom is a bolder metaphor still; at any rate it is one upon which a man should hardly venture without working out very distinctly the points of similitude. At another page, he says that Mr. Disraeli "is like a foreign body among the Conservative party, which will one day be ejected from it in some unexpected part, 'as a needle that has been swallowed years ago will work out—not without pain and gathering and inflammation—in the fleshy part of the arm or the leg, or even at the foot.'" The metaphor is not a bad one at starting, but Mr. Hutton runs a risk of "cracking the wind of the poor phrase." What idea is conveyed by Mr. Disraeli "working out at the fleshy part of the arm" of the Conservative party? This occasional indistinctness of conception is indicated in another way by Mr. Hutton's disposition to use italics. This is an attempt to do by typography what should be done by language. When he says, for example, that Mr. P. A. Taylor's speeches have always in them "the genuine scream of the demagogue," he sees that the word "scream" is roughly applicable to Mr. P. A. Taylor, but that it is not quite emphatic or characteristic enough; he therefore tries to make up for the deficient energy of the phrase by a change in the type, just as he tries to get more out of his metaphors than they will fairly bear. Italics, as a rule, should be left for ladies' letters. These failings are pardonable from the haste necessary to a leading article, though they might perhaps have been corrected in a deliberate republication; but, after all drawbacks, Mr. Hutton has produced a very interesting book, which has the great merit of being personal without being scandalous, and which will give some assistance to all who are in the habit of criticising politicians.

[February 24, 1866.]

BARNUM ON HUMBUGS.*

THIS is a most disappointing book. To be introduced to the humbugs of the world by a Barnum is indeed, as Miss Codger would have said, a thrilling moment in its impressiveness on what we call our feelings; for, if there is a man whose revelations of the craft or mystery of humbug ought to be interesting, assuredly that man's name is P. T. Barnum. There has always been, too, so much *bonhomie* and assurance mixed up with his humbug that we had a right to expect perfect candour and openness in his treatment of the subject. He had never seemed to be ashamed of his vocation; on the contrary, he always appeared rather to glory in it, and it was not unreasonable to expect something in the nature of a treatise on humbug considered as a fine art, together with an exposition of the philosophy of human gullibility, from a master and professor of such eminence. Surely the man who was able to make out of very moderately endowed dwarf the most celebrated manikin the world has ever seen, must have a profound knowledge of human nature and of the modes of operating on it. Then, again, it is obvious that the attractiveness of a woolly horse and that of Washington's nurse must necessarily depend on totally different principles, and it would have been most gratifying to know what those principles are. But, instead of being enlightened on these and other points of interest in the present volume, we are fobbed off with a series of cold, commonplace essays on impostures, quite in the style of the *Library of Useful Knowledge*. This is not handsome in P. T. Barnum. It is not even commonly fair. He was not bound, of course, to divulge any of the secrets of his profession unless he liked, but he certainly had no right to raise expectations which he did not mean to gratify. He must have known that, when he announced himself as the author of a work on humbug, people would naturally look for something about that sort of humbug in which he has shown himself an adept, and not for a dissertation on things which, properly speaking, are not humbugs at all. It is a misnomer to apply the word to bubble companies, mock auctions, adulterations of food, and the like. For these we have a severer nomenclature, which describes them properly as swindles, cheats, rogueries, &c.; and it is letting them off far too cheaply to call them humbugs, while it is wasting a very useful little word which we require for the more harmless forms of deception.

As his expansion of the term includes company in which no man would like to be seen, we can excuse a certain shyness which the author displays in admitting himself to be a humbug. He is not so disingenuous as to actually deny that he is one. He rather confesses and avoids, pointing out that there are humbugs and humbugs—some answering to Webster's definition, as being persons who practise "imposition under fair pretences"; others who have recourse to "novel expedients" in order to attract public attention, and who are not impostors at all, but very frequently most honourable and upright men. He is quite right when he says that Webster's is not the only, nor even the generally accepted, definition of the term. When people speak of a man or a thing as a humbug, they do not mean, as a general rule, to impute any dishonesty beyond what lies in gaining an object in a roundabout way. That eccentric etymologist, Mr. J. Bellenden Ker, says, if we remember rightly, that the word "humbug" is Dutch, "ham bij oog," a "taking hold of by the eye." If we were still in the fine old days of derivations, it would be easy to find a much more respectable pedigree for the word by tracing it up to *βόηθος*, and so making it of the same family with the French and old English "bombarde" and "bobance"—pride, boasting, noisy pretentiousness, and the Spanish "zumba," which is as nearly as possible our "chaff" in its slang sense. This origin, besides accounting in a decent and rational manner for the first syllable, would be far more in accordance with the ordinary acceptance of the word than that devised by Mr. Ker. The aim of humbug always is, first, to attract notice, and then to distract the attention from the real object of the operator. In the purest and simplest forms of humbug this is effected by addling, bothering, or mystifying the patient by means of some kind of bombus, or buzz, or chatter; or, as Bacon puts it, by taking care to "entertaine and amuse the party with whom you deal with some other discourse, that he be not too much awake to make objections." The most familiar instance is the cheap-Jack, who may be considered a sort of rudimentary Barnum. He wants to sell his frying-pan or his pocket-book, but he avoids attempting to sell by direct means; partly because nobody in the crowd just then wants a frying-pan or a pocket-book, partly because he knows that man, like the pig, is more easily driven in a certain direction if he does not know where he is going. He, therefore, bewilders his audience with discursive patter about the Royal Family, his own personal history—anything that will divert their minds from the contemplation of the fact that he is an itinerant tradesman in search of customers—at least until he has managed to effect one sale. After that it does not matter so much, for experience has taught him that if his fellow-creatures resemble the animal above mentioned in one particular, they are like the sheep in another, and that where one goes the rest will follow. The proceeding is not necessarily dishonest, for probably the pocket-books and frying-pans are fair marketable articles, and are sold at a reasonable price; nor is the man an impostor, except in the sense of imposing his goods on the public. But he is a humbug, because, in-

stead of relying entirely on the merits of his wares and the wants of his customers, he trusts to his knowledge of human nature and human weaknesses to effect a purely commercial transaction. No one ever brought this branch of humbug, to such a pitch of perfection as the late M. Mangin, the pencil-maker of Paris. With inferior practitioners the maxim of *ars est celare artem* holds good. The one thing needful is to prevent any suspicion in the minds of the humbugged that they are submitting to such an operation. But M. Mangin was so finished an artist that he could dispense with this precaution. He could humbug even after he had declared himself to be a humbug. When he had donned his helmet and tunic and cuirass, and sufficiently fascinated the crowd by his appearance and preparations, he invariably expounded to them his great theory of humbug. "I am a charlatan, a mountebank," he would say, "not from choice but from necessity. You, gentlemen, created that necessity. You would not buy my pencils when I tried to sell them in the ordinary way, and I have been compelled to attract you with din and glitter." Here we have the whole *rationale* of humbug, at least from the professional point of view. The general public is a most unreasoning body, and is rarely influenced by any considerations of merit in forming its decisions; while it is, on the other hand, easily influenced through its senses or its weaknesses. Let us, therefore, say the humbugs, waste no time over the realities of things, but attack our public at once on its vulnerable side.

Noise of some kind, whether it take the form of oratory, discursive argument, the gabble of the cheap-Jack, or the barrel-organ, trumpet, and patter of M. Mangin, is the instrument most commonly employed for this purpose, and perhaps originally the word humbug carried with it the idea of confusing or distracting sound of some sort. But the thing itself is protean in its power of assuming various shapes. Some time ago—perhaps it is to be seen still—there was on view, in a shop not very far from the office of this journal, a most excellent illustration of the flexibility of humbug. It was a small working model of a steam-engine, which a baked-potato and meat-pie salesman with a remarkable knowledge of human nature had placed in a conspicuous position in his window. Now here we have a capital example of humbug, and of the way in which it acts. A steam-engine has no connection whatever with the art of baking potatoes or seasoning mutton-pies, but there is in a vast majority of minds a sort of vague reverence attached to it on account of the mysteriously intelligent manner in which it does its work—a confused idea, something like that of the Pasha in *Eothen*, that it can do pretty nearly anything its gives its mind to. The presence of such a partner, though its share in the business may not have been obvious, could not fail to give a certain distinction to the house, and to insinuate into the beholder's mind a puzzled sense of there being something unusual about the pies and potatoes on the establishment. Comestibles found in such society must be of a higher and loftier nature than the articles usually offered by the trade. Such, probably, was the reasoning of the spirited proprietor, and no doubt it was attended by the happiest results to his business.

Every advertisement, of course, that travels beyond the region of mere fact is a piece of humbug of the same family as this—as are devices like those of Genin the hatter, who paid 225 dollars for the first ticket for Jenny Lind's first concert in America, knowing that the fact would be telegraphed all over the United States; and of Barnum himself, when he offered a thousand pounds to be allowed to send the first twenty words through the Atlantic Telegraph cable. There is an under-current of cool sarcasm in all artifices of this class that is very pleasant to contemplate; they express so plainly the opinion of the inventors that the public is an ass surrounded by bundles of hay, and that all any particular bundle has to do to secure a preference is to catch the creature's eye, or fix its attention by some contrivance or other. It is in this department of humbug that we feel our author's shortcomings most acutely. Here he would have been at home. No other man could have spoken with such weight and authority on what may be called applied or practical humbug. There was not so much, perhaps, to be expected from him on other branches of the subject, such as humbug considered socially and personally, the various sorts and degrees of humbugs—the humbug positive and the humbug relative, the natural or born humbug, and the humbug by force of circumstances, and so forth. This possibly was rather out of his line, as was the treatment of humbug from a biographical and historical point of view. A great work still to be written is the *Lives of Eminent Humbugs*. Diogenes, for instance, was an undeniable humbug of the purest water. Louis XI. was a specimen of a very rare and curious variety. James I. was a humbug of a much coarser and commoner grain. Probably, coming down to modern times, a place would have to be found for O'Connell, and it would be very hard indeed to exclude many other popular favourites. The book should be done as nearly as possible in the manner of Plutarch, and well-selected humbugs of different ages might be set side by side and compared, so as to show how humbug is affected by time, place, and circumstance.

This being, in a general way, our idea of what a work on humbug, by a competent and conscientious man duly impressed with the greatness of his subject, ought to be, it is scarcely necessary for us to add that we consider the present volume most unsatisfactory. In their proper place, the chapters on "Spiritualism" and the "Davenport Brothers" might be instructive and entertaining, but to catalogue such things as specimens of humbug is a loose and unsystematic treatment of a matter demanding scientific accuracy,

and is calculated to produce great confusion of terms. Nothing could show more strongly P. T. Barnum's want of a fine instinctive feeling about humbug than his devoting some thirty or forty pages to the subject of hoaxes in general, and that very clever one, the Miscegenation hoax, in particular. It may be that, as great painters seldom write well about art, Barnum is too sublime an artist in humbug to be its historian. But when we reflect upon his fertility of invention in devising modes of keeping his name before the public, we cannot avoid a suspicion that this may be, after all, only one of his "novel expedients," as he calls them; and that the book itself is a better illustration of humbug than any to be found in its pages.

SUGAR.*

MMR. REED has compressed into one small volume all the information respecting sugar, from the moment at which the cane is planted to that at which the finished product makes its appearance in the grocer's window, which any one who has no business interest in the subject can possibly desire. He tells us how much sugar we eat, what we give for it, where we get it from, and how it is made. Except to members of Parliament with a turn for statistics, the last is perhaps the least unattractive side of the question, at any rate after we have once grasped the interesting fact that, in 1864, 9,736,657 cwt. were retained for home consumption, which was an average allowance to each of us of 42 lbs.; and therefore it is to this part of the work that we chiefly propose to introduce our readers. If they care to go deeper into tables of imports and returns of revenue, they will find that Mr. Reed has done his utmost to simplify the operation for them.

On the very threshold of the natural history of sugar, the un instructed mind is confronted with a difficulty. Why has not the common sugar-cane been long ago superseded? As far back as 1790, another variety, called the Otaheitan cane, was introduced into the West Indies, which seems to combine all the merits incident to a plant of that class. It is stronger and taller than the common cane, comes sooner to maturity, and will grow in poorer and more exhausted soil, while at the same time it is one-fourth richer in sugar. It must be a strong vested interest that can hold its own against such superiority as this. The cane in all its varieties is propagated by cuttings, but, wherever the climate is suited to it, the same root will go on sending up fresh crops for many years in succession. During the period of growth, a plantation requires but little care; but when once the sugar harvest has begun, grinding must go on continuously, as the juice will not keep twenty minutes without fermenting, if the proper treatment is suspended. It is this circumstance which has given slave labour so great an advantage over free in the production of sugar, which "is a branch of labour that, more than any other, is incompatible with unsettled relations between master and servant." It is in Cuba, therefore, that all the details of the process are to be seen in the greatest perfection. By the time the crop is ready, the mill and all the machinery have been carefully examined, the walls of the boiling-house whitewashed, and the pans and tanks cleaned and cleared of the thousands of rats and cockroaches which have been attracted to them by the remains of molasses. The few days before work begins are kept as a holiday by black and white alike, time even for necessary sleep being hard to be had after that date. In reaping, each cane is taken off with a knife as close as possible to the root, cut into two or three pieces of about a yard long, and then thrown back, to be gathered into bundles by the attendant women and children, and carried in bullock-carts to the mill. There it is passed under iron or steel rollers, from which it comes out in the form of a crushed mass, having yielded, however, little more than half its juice—an amount of waste which it has hitherto been found impossible to materially lessen. The juice is now a thin green fluid closely resembling the white of an egg, and capable, like that, of throwing up a great proportion of semi-solid matter when submitted to great heat. This is effected by passing the liquid from one to another of a series of copper pans ranged over a flue which extends for forty or fifty feet from the furnace at one end of the sugar-house to the chimney at the other. As soon as the juice has grown warm in the first of these, a little cream of lime is added, which coagulates and brings to the surface the vegetable albumen, at the same time changing the colour from green to yellow. When the scum is removed, the juice is ladled into the next vessel, until, as the evaporation proceeds, the thickened syrup finally arrives at the smallest pan, which is placed directly over the furnace. How long it should remain in this last stage is a matter of extreme nicety only to be learned by experience, but as soon as it has boiled sufficiently it is turned out into a shallow wooden trough and left to cool. When cool, the contents, now a dark brown mixture of sugar and molasses, are put into casks with perforated bottoms, through which the molasses drains away. After thirty days of this discipline the sugar is considered as sufficiently pure for shipment, and the casks are closed up. Sugar thus prepared is known to the trade as "muscovado." Another and better class goes by the name of "clayed," and with this a different process is adopted in the latter stages of the manufacture. Instead of being put into

the cooling trough, the juice is at once turned into cone-shaped moulds of metal or earthenware, holding from eighty to a hundred and twenty pounds each. These are turned upside down, and a mixture of clay and mortar spread over the base of each. The molasses drains away through the apex, and the water dripping from the clay percolates through the sugar and helps to carry away much of the impure and coloured matter, which is considerably more soluble than sugar itself. The object of mixing clay with the water is to make the passage of the latter more gradual, and so diminish the otherwise enormous waste.

In one or other of these forms most of the sugar we import reaches England, the quantity imported "raw" in 1864 being 10,680,188 cwt., against 925,694 cwt. imported already "refined." The conversion into this purer state is usually effected in this country, so to be successful, it needs greater mechanical skill and more complete mechanical appliances than are to be found in the West Indies. The process commences on the top storey of the refinery, where the raw sugar is first collected in heaps, and then shovelled into a rectangular iron vessel capable of holding a thousand or more gallons, called the "blow-up cistern." Water is turned on at the same time, and the whole rapidly heated to boiling point by the passage of a current of steam. "Blowing up" causes a great deal of scum to rise to the surface, especially when, as is the case with all but the very purest sugars, bullock's blood, or as the refiners term it, "spice," is added to the mixture. This scum is removed by filtration, the liquid being turned from the cistern into a shallow tank, whence it passes through a series of canvass-bags, and, when perfectly bright, is allowed to flow on to a bed of animal charcoal. It is now of the colour of old port wine, but some hours later, when it reappears below the charcoal, it has become as colourless as water. It is then ready for boiling, which takes place by means of a vacuum pan at a lower degree of heat, and consequently with less injury to the sugar, than would be necessary under ordinary atmospheric pressure. When the boiling has gone on long enough, a valve in the lower part of the pan is opened, and the whole mass falls into a heated vessel on the floor below, where it remains "until the crystals have become large enough and hard enough to please the operator." The concluding processes closely resemble those in the corresponding stage of the raw material. The sugar is poured into moulds, and all the moisture allowed to drain away. Even then, however, it is still coloured, and the last trace of impurity is not removed until the cones have been "clayed," the clay in this instance, however, consisting only of a solution of sugar and water, which sinks through the sugar-loaf and leaves it in that state of whiteness with which we are familiar in the sugar-basin. The drippings of this final purification are saved to be made into an inferior sugar; "their drippings, boiled, drained, and cleared, become pieces; the drippings of pieces similarly treated are bastards; and the drippings of bastards are treacle."

Of the 10,680,188 cwt. of unrefined sugar imported into England in 1864, upwards of 6,000,000 cwt. came from four sources. Of these Cuba is by far the most important, the export to England being 2,887,795 cwt. The fertility of the island is extraordinary, as no manure is used except the refuse of the canes, and many of the estates have gone on producing sugar for upwards of a century. There are about 2,500 sugar plantations, varying in size from 50 to 1,500 acres, the proportion of labour being reckoned at one negro to every two acres. In some cases fewer hands are employed, but only at a reckless waste of negro strength and life. Next to Cuba in the list of sugar-producing countries comes Brazil, which sent us in 1864 1,189,496 cwt., and which wants nothing but labour to send any conceivable quantity more, as only a fiftieth part of the soil has as yet been brought under any kind of cultivation. Mauritius exports to England upwards of 1,000,000 cwt. annually; and British Guiana, comprising Demerara and Berbice, about the same quantity. The Demerara planters seem to have proved satisfactorily that sugar can be raised by free labour as successfully as under a system of slavery. The cane juice produced in the colony is, in its natural state, peculiarly ill adapted for manufacture, as from the swampy character of the soil it is largely mixed with saline and other impurities. Yet none of the West India islands turn out such bright and crystallized sugar as British Guiana, a result which is wholly due to the energy and scientific skill which have been brought to bear upon the manufacture. In common with the greater part of the West Indies, Demerara suffers from deficiency of labour; but the colonists have strenuously exerted themselves to remedy this drawback also, and they have been the first who have succeeded in inducing Chinese immigrants to bring their wives with them, and thus remove the only drawback to the employment of the most frugal and industrious race of labourers in the world.

A few years back, the Bengal Presidency was the most important of all our sources of sugar supply, but in 1863 the export was merely nominal; and though it had risen again considerably in 1864, it was still only a third of what it had been thirteen years earlier. Indian sugar is largely made from the juice of the date palm. This tree, though differently named by botanists, is said to be undistinguishable from the true date palm of Arabia, except that its fruit—either from careless cultivation, or more probably from the extraction of the sugar from the trunk—is only a fourth of the size, and of very inferior flavour. In the alluvial districts of Bengal the young trees are ready for tapping in the fifth year from their being planted, though they are not considered to be in full yield

* *The History of Sugar and Sugar-yielding Plants.* By William Reed. London: Longmans & Co. 1866.

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until the third year of bearing. The juice is extracted in November. A triangular incision about an inch deep and six inches long on each side is made in the bark, and the sap trickles through a piece of grooved bamboo inserted at the apex of the triangle into an earthen pot which is hung by a string beneath it. The pot is placed there in the evening, and removed at sunrise the next morning. After this has been repeated for three days, the tree is allowed to rest until the seventh day, when another incision is made and the juice again flows. This process goes on at similar intervals till about the middle of February, when the increasing heat of the weather causes the juice to ferment and become useless:—

Daily at sunrise, throughout the season, the industrious ryot may be seen climbing his trees, and collecting at a convenient spot beneath them the earthen pots containing the juice yielded during the past night. Under a rude shed, covered with the leaves of the date tree itself, and erected under the shade of the plantation, is prepared the boiling apparatus to serve for the goor season. It consists of a hole of about three feet in diameter sunk about two feet in the ground, over which are supported by mud arches four thin earthen pans, of a semi-globular shape, and eighteen inches in diameter; the hole itself is the furnace, and has two apertures on opposite sides for feeding in the fuel, and for the escape of the smoke. The fire is lit as soon as the juice is collected, and poured into the four pans, which are kept constantly supplied with fresh juice as the water evaporates, until the whole produce of the morning is boiled down to the required density. As the contents of each pan become sufficiently boiled, they are ladled out into other earthen pots or jars, of various sizes, from five to twenty seers of contents, according to local custom, and in these the boiled extract cools, crystallizes into a hard compound of granulated sugar and molasses, and is brought to market for sale as *goor*.

Here the connection of the original cultivator with the product ceases. The *goor* is sold to a distinct class of operators, in whose hands it undergoes the necessary treatment for the separation of the molasses. In some cases the mixture is placed in coarse sacks and pressed between bamboos lashed together, until the molasses is actually forced out. This process may be repeated two or three times, each application of pressure further reducing the original weight of *goor*, and leaving the residue drier and lighter coloured. A better kind of sugar is obtained by a process very similar to claying, the *goor* being placed in conical baskets over the base of which wet grass is laid. The natives also display considerable skill in sugar-refining by very simple means, the raw sugar being melted in water brought to boiling-point in an earthen pan over an open fire, filtered through a cotton cloth, and then boiled briskly until the water has sufficiently evaporated to allow of the formation of crystals. Of the third principal kind of sugar—that derived from beetroot—we know but little in England, though in France and Belgium "it is a very important and increasing article of commerce." The actual sugar is in all respects identical with that made from cane-juice, the only difference being in the greater variety and more persistent character of the impure matters with which it is originally united. This fact has necessitated some modifications of the manufacturing processes, but the principle on which they are conducted is substantially the same as what has been here described.

WALTER GORING.*

LOVE in novels is no longer the thing it used to be. It has vanished, as bright frosty Christmases and sharp old-fashioned winters have vanished. Neither heroes nor heroines care a tittle for one another of what they did in old times, and the prime anxiety of the author is to make them all as wavering and uncertain in their inclinations as human nature, or the human nature of novels, will permit. The glowing reports which reach this country from time to time of the promiscuous bliss of the Mormon settlement at Utah must be infecting the imaginations of English novelists. For though as yet nobody has ventured to leave his hero polygamously wedded to a group of charming heroines, each of whom has gone through a sea of troubles in order to win his hand—or rather, in this case, a couple of his fingers—we are allowed to see quite plainly that he would have been very thankful if public opinion were sufficiently ripened to permit him this admirable consummation. One cannot help feeling, for example, that Walter Goring is a blighted man. He only carries off one of the three ladies with whom, all through the course of the story, he has been in love. The writer has done all she could for him, by betrothing him for a time to another of the three, and then making her die of consumption, so that he might at least be spared the mortification of seeing her peacefully married to somebody else. The third she is compelled to give away, and this we feel must have been a severe deprivation to a hero with such a wonderfully comprehensive power of affection. One of the most remarkable things, however, about the story is that marriage or betrothal does not constitute the least barrier in the world against the vagrant tide of love-making, so that Walter Goring may be supposed to continue his exceeding promiscuity as long as he chooses, in spite of his marriage. While a single man, he did not scruple to make love to his friend's wife in a very forcible way, and there is no reason for thinking that his own marriage will serve to breed any vulgar scruples of this sort. His wife, too, cannot justly complain of his amiable inconstancy, as she had originally been the very friend's wife who had allowed him to make this forcible love. Besides, in the fictitious world in which the authoress has placed him, it is not at all the

thing for wives and husbands to have much affectionate concern or respect for one another. Marriage seems to be a lottery in which the first draw is inevitably a blank. In a perfect state of society, we presume, all married couples at the end of a year or so ought to be allowed to draw again, and, as it were, to re-sort themselves, like the little birds in spring. As this cannot at present be very satisfactorily contrived, the only plan, when the four or five ladies with whom your hero falls in love happen to be already married, is to kill off their husbands. This may seem rather a rude and bloody method, but no other is open. Of Walter Goring's three loves, only two are married, so the slaughter is nothing to speak of. One husband dies of a shock given him by the sight of his horse being staked by a carriage-pole, while the other is so good as to take to drinking and evil courses, which speedily bring him to his grave, to the great satisfaction of the charming survivor. The exigencies of fiction bore rather hard upon this gentleman, by the way; for he had behaved like a very decent and high-spirited person until the rapacious hero came in the way, and the authoress felt bound to provide him with an extra string to his bow. From this time the wretched man's fate was sealed. The gods willed his destruction; so they drove him out of his senses first, as they are said to do in the well-known Latin verse. The revolution takes place in a single day, which is rather swift work even for the gods. The man awakes a generous, helpful, and genial fellow; he goes to bed a sot and a churl. He is brought home brutally drunk by the considerate hero. The wife is very indignant, and, adjourning to another room with the hero, gives way to "big blinding drops of rage and shame." A little of what in stage slang is styled "business" ensues, when the lady, "with all an impulsive woman's disregard of consequences, curved her hand, and, putting it on his hand, said, 'When you go away, what shall I do?'" This was naturally rather trying, or, as the authoress says, "the strained cord snapped"; and forthwith "Walter Goring seized the hand, flung his arm round her waist, and for one moment held her to his heart, and his lips to her face." However, all is well that ends well, and the hero immediately apologizes, while the heroine deprecates his excuses, cordially, though not without sobs, avowing that it was all her own fault. This we are bound to say it was. A married woman who curves her hand, and then puts it on a quasi-lover's with an imploring appeal, must expect the quasi-lover to forget that she has an authentic copy of her "marriage lines" in her pocket, and a drunken husband in the next room. The impulsive woman with the disregard of consequences really escaped very lightly. Not so the husband. As in the contest between the mad dog and the Quaker, "the dog it was that died." The husband himself was no better than he should have been, for Walter Goring saw him on one occasion making love by moonlight to a gamekeeper's daughter, and was, we need scarcely say, convulsed with virtuous indignation at the scandalous spectacle.

Jupiter, says the old fable, gives a man two wallets—one to wear before him, and the other on his back. Into the latter he throws his own faults; into the first, the faults of his neighbours. In this respect the hero is drawn with an astonishing truth to nature. Indeed, we should suspect the authoress of a deep and cynical design to satirize the foibles of male nature in general in the person of Walter Goring, only the foibles of her female characters are still more extraordinary. The other married lady, it is true, "loved Walter Goring for long years, within the strictest bounds while her husband lived," which it is uncommonly gratifying to know. But there is one dreadfully improper little heroine, who, having fallen in love with a gay gentleman in the house of her guardian, casually rushes up to London, and takes up her quarters in his lodgings for a few days, for the purpose of trying to persuade him to marry her. With a few modifications, she repeats the experiment a second time; but in neither case, unfortunately, is the enterprise crowned with the success it merits. Even the gayest of gentlemen are generally content to accept the ordinary notions about what constitutes impropriety in a lady, and the idea of marrying one simply because she had compromised herself is the very last that would occur to them. In the present case, this virtue is most handsomely rewarded, for the gentleman who had been thus pertinaciously wooed is forced by Walter Goring, whose virtue is always terribly keen when other people are concerned, to agree to marry the lady. Unfortunately she dies, but he comes in for a very good fortune just as if she had lived. We fancy that it is the same sense of poetic justice which made the authoress drive Walter Goring into an engagement with this improper little lady, between her two escapades, in blessed unconsciousness of her transgression. This must have been intended for a judgment upon him for the famous scene with the drunken man's wife. But then poetic justice demands more than this. Why should the "impulsive woman" carry off the hero for her prize, while that more excellent wife who had kept her love within "the strictest bounds" while her husband lived is coolly neglected, and left to take up with a second-rate artist? If we are to have poetic justice, as Mr. J. Hawkins said, "give me reciprocity."

Signs are not wanting that the reaction against the narrow self-deceiving respectability of the tea-table is in danger of being carried to an injurious excess. It is absurd to suppose, as honest old ladies in country towns do, that every wife is, or at least has been, passionately enamoured of her husband. A good many considerations besides a romantic passion—considerations, too, that

* *Walter Goring. A Story.* By Annie Thomas. 3 vols. London: Chapman & Hall. 1866.

it would be very foolish to overlook—enter into choice in marriage. And there is the important fact to be remembered, that not one nature in a thousand is at all capable of being seized by romantic passion or by passion of any sort. It is quite undeniable that some wives are discontented or even disgusted with the partners of their joys, or more frequently with the humdrum existence they are constrained to lead. The novelists, therefore, who habitually represent married life, or any other life for that matter, as a serene bed of rose-leaves, are very false artists. But it is much worse art to picture all the world as abandoned to licentious irregularities. We certainly do not want novels to be written as if their authors had the fear of a Minerva Academy ever before their eyes. Admitting, however, that there are a great many more things in heaven probably, and in earth assuredly, than are dreamed of in the philosophy of the middle-class tea-table, we don't wish to see the philosophy of Utah substituted for it. The authoress of *Walter Goring* has allowed her spirited and just repugnance to the cant of "well-regulated minds" to carry her a little too far in the other direction.

This defective moral tone—for the story certainly does not deserve the more extreme and harsh epithets which have been attached to it—tends to make the reader overlook some of the merits of the book. There is a great deal of agreeable sprightliness in the writing, and the authoress has the knack of drawing her characters in a very clear and incisive style. The dull fractious mother-in-law is excellently brought out, and there is a touch of subtlety in the description of Dinah, who, though sour and ill-humoured, would never allow herself to be unjust to the people she hated. The hopeless narrowness of outlook that marks the life of clever women who are mated with dull lords, and the wretchedness of a clever girl who has to live among prosaic and unpleasant relatives, have never been presented with more force and effect than in the case of Charlotte Fellowes. Daisy herself, in spite of her improprieties and transgressions, serves to show that Miss Thomas has a certain creative faculty and abundance of cleverness, which might produce really good work if she could grasp a more exalted conception of art and life. She has improved so much since the publication of her first book that she may be fairly expected to amend this defect too. In *Walter Goring* the style is very much better than in her former novels; she shows a stronger grasp of her story, and she has proved her powers of self-denial by abstaining from talk about horses. The plot is a mistake, though the honest feeling of contempt for social hypocrisies which probably dictated it is very creditable.

MUSHROOMS.*

WE have nothing to say against M. Morel's little treatise upon mushrooms and kindred fungi—whether from a botanic, a toxicological, or, above all, an alimentary point of view—on the mere score of its proceeding from a clerical pen. Whatever occupations or studies may be held by the stricter sort to be tabooed as a means of solace or recreation in a clergyman's moments of leisure, the pursuit of natural history has never, we believe, been held a sin by the surest or most censorious of precisians. Nor need it detract one whit from the force of such a plea, as applied on behalf of the subject before us, that this particular study has for its aim not merely the abstract result of a large and interesting addition to the sum total of human knowledge, but also the more substantial one of ministering to the alimentary—we need not shrink from adding, the gastronomical—wants of mankind. Neither in adding to the stock of the people's food, nor in enhancing the general enjoyment of life, is it out of character for a clergyman to bring to bear the stores of his experience and observation. It may be that in the Church of France, as in our own, there are bishops who haul their clergy over the coals for mixing themselves up in any sense or degree with what they term agricultural pursuits, with the same severity as for the enormity of wearing beards. We hope it may not be so in the diocese in which M. Morel is *cure-doyen*, and which, though he withholds its name, we take, from his description of its soil and its vegetable products, to lie somewhere in the district of the Upper Loire. His offence, if it be one, has at least precedents on this side of the Channel. The late Dr. Badham, whose work was the first to open the eyes of the English public to the boundless resources in the way of food that are habitually neglected in our edible fungi, combined, to the twofold benefit of the public, the service of the Church with the profession of medicine. Our own columns not long ago bore witness to the excellence of the remarks, upon this among other topics of popular information, contained in the *Contributions to Natural History* put forth by a "Rural D.D." And Dr. Lindley has acknowledged himself indebted to his friend the Rev. M. J. Berkeley for the better part of that section of his *Vegetable Kingdom* which treats of the various species of fungi.

The method of classification adopted by M. Morel in his *Traité des Champignons* is essentially founded upon nature. Confining his views more particularly to the esculent varieties of fungi, he feels himself under no compulsion either to adopt or to modify the technical and highly artificial system of distinctions or of nomenclature on which professed botanists, from Linnaeus to Fries, have sought to build up a scientific mycology. Looking, indeed, to the widely conflicting views given forth by professors of opposite schools, as well as to the admission of the most eminent of their

number that all that is known of this mysterious cryptogam is next to nothing, there can be the less harm, so far as a popular manual is concerned, in discarding a learned terminology or a minutely precise distribution of orders, for the sake of enabling the reader to judge with certainty between what is really known and what is hypothetical, as well as of setting before him at a glance the most common varieties, and teaching him to discriminate the good from the bad as articles of diet. When we ask what is known for certain of the nature and properties of mushrooms, their mode of propagation by nature or art, and what sorts we should eat and what avoid, we need not start from the primary division into *Hymenomycete* and *Gasteromycete*, nor settle the accuracy of Linnaeus in restricting the use of the ancient word *Agaricus* to the lamelliferous species only. The author's simpler plan is to describe by turns the different varieties which meet us in our walks abroad or in the market, and, after treating of those generic qualities which they have in common, to point out those external characteristics by which the senses themselves may be trusted to know them apart. Thus, besides the common *agaric*, to which the word "mushroom" is most ordinarily restricted amongst us, we have chapters in succession upon the *Helleba*, the *Spatularia* and *Clavaria*, the *Hydnium*, the *Boletus*, the *Merulle*, and the *Morelle*. It is to be observed that the French word *champignon* is popularly employed in the generic sense, to embrace each and all of these subordinate varieties, in the same way that the word "mushroom" is loosely taken amongst ourselves; the *mousseron* proper, so called from the mossy or grassy tufts from which it springs, holding a special place under the class of agarics. "Voici pour les Anglais le roi des champignons." The *Agaric gymno mousseron*—*Agaricus albellus*, in the system of our author—commonly known among us as the *Agaricus campestris*, forms but one out of about two hundred species of *gymnos*, none of which, according to De Candolle, have been found poisonous. So slight, however, are the points of difference between this and not a few of the 414 varieties of agaric enumerated by M. Morel, that, even with the aid of the clearest directions and the best-executed drawings, we doubt if any unscientific hand can ever be trusted in the choice, without some little dread of the catastrophe of Claudius. The plates in M. Morel's book, without being on the handsome scale of those of Dr. Badham or Mrs. Hussey, do as much as can be done, by their number and distinctness, towards separating, to ordinary minds at least, the most widely marked varieties. At the same time, we find the author disclaiming all idea of guaranteeing thus an absolutely safe result. Nor are even the best experts, we are cautioned, wholly beyond the risk of error. Expedients of divers kinds have been suggested, not only as a cure for the mushroom poison when imbibed into the system, but as a means of rendering the most poisonous sorts innocuous beforehand. The English remedy, we are told, consists in making the patient swallow a large quantity of refined sugar, or, in the last extremity, injecting sugared water into an opened vein. In France a method of preparing funguses of all kinds, so as to ensure their being harmless, was announced by M. Paulet in 1793; and the system of M. Gérard, which consists in steeping the suspected specimens in brine or vinegar and water, has been approved by the Sub-Committee of Public Health, after a series of experiments made upon such deadly kinds as the *amanita muscaria*, the *fausse orange*, and the noxious allies of the *Boletus*. Be the value, however, of this discovery what it may, as applied in cases of suspicion, few, we suspect, will ever be found to whom the certainty of robbing their favourite luxury of its most delicate flavour will not outweigh the risk of meeting once in a thousand times with a "Griper" or a *Necator*. With all gratitude to the devoted *savant* for a nostrum gained at so much risk to himself, we can but protest, for our part, against being called upon to go beyond the wary conclusion of our author:—"Nous devons dire, toutefois, que nous n'en avons point fait nous-même l'utile expérience sur les espèces les plus dangereuses."

The whole mushroom tribe—the "manna of the poor," as it has been termed by M. Roques—comes nearest to the animal class, in virtue of its cellular structure, joined with its highly nitrogenized character, and its property of absorbing oxygen and exhaling carbon, or, in certain special instances, hydrogen or azotic gas. Of all vegetable forms, however, the fungus may be described as about the least highly organized, if we look to the absence of a circulating fluid, or of a bi-sexual system, so far as botanists are able to speak. So perplexing is the mode of growth and propagation in the whole fungoid group as to have thrown certain unphilosophical observers back upon the empty fallacy of spontaneous or equivocal generation. Seeing, indeed, that they germinate in a manner apparently the most capricious, whether in nature or under artificial treatment, alike from unprepared ground or from raw manure, from infusion of seed or from transplantation of germs, it is impossible to define the process in any scientific way. Where the spores are so infinite in number, as well as so microscopically minute, that ten millions have been reckoned by Fries in a single individual of *reticularia maxima*, there is no assignable limit to the extent to which these seeds may be diffused by the air and other media, and, meeting with appropriate conditions, be engendered into life. Following out a theory laid down in part by De Candolle, M. Morel is bold enough to take his stand upon a total distinction of essence and function in the twofold structure of the plant. The portion underground, the *mycelium*, or filamentous substance, albeit less in volume, is in fact the true vegetable organism. What is seen above

* *Traité des Champignons au point de vue botanique, alimentaire et toxicologique.* Par L.-F. Morel, Cure-Doyen. Paris: Gernier-Bailliére. 1865.

[February 24, 1866.]

ground, and is known as the mushroom, is nothing else than the reproductive organ. If the earth be dug up, the *plexus* of white threads may be found knotted like a ganglion, and spreading its absorbent feelers in all directions, long before putting forth its stalk into the open air. And when the reproductive organ is thrust through the surface of the soil to scatter its spores in the air, and after the crop is gathered, the same plant will be found in a day or two to have made a fresh effort at reproduction, and an indefinite succession of mushrooms is the result. We do not see how our author would deal with the case of those parasitic and other fungi which, like the *festuca hepatica* or the *angioleum sinuosum*, show no proper external organ whatever; but his remarks at all events apply with force to the whole class of fungus to which his immediate survey is confined:—

La plante du Champignon n'est donc point ce qui paraît à la lumière comme dans les autres végétaux; elle est ce qui se cache sous terre, ce qui germe, croît et se fortifie dans l'ombre. Quand elle a suffisamment grandi en secret, quand elle a entassé les trésors nécessaires à sa reproduction, quand enfin son heure vient à sonner, elle lance rapidement à la lumière ses organes reproducteurs qui souvent disparaissent presque aussi rapidement qu'ils ont apparu. Voilà ce qui a donné lieu à ce proverbe populaire *pousser comme des Champignons*; mais on le voit, le proverbe ici manque de vérité dans son principe. A la rigueur, les Champignons ne poussent pas plus vite que beaucoup d'autres plantes. Comme elles, ils emploient à se développer un temps plus ou moins long; ensuite lorsqu'ils ont atteint un degré de croissance suffisant pour leur reproduction, si la température leur est favorable, ils émettent rapidement leur organe reproducteur qui souvent disparaît aussitôt. De sorte ce double phénomène n'a rien qui doive nous étonner, si nous considérons qu'il se produit de la même manière dans beaucoup d'autres plantes, surtout parmi celles qui sont dites plantes grasses.

Mushrooms are, then, subterranean plants, which follow the ordinary laws of vegetable growth and reproduction, inscrutable as the latter phenomenon may be in certain stages of the process. Proverbially rapid as the expansion of the visible structure of the plant may be—the ordinary sorts commonly attaining their full growth during the few hours preceding the dawn of day, and the *phallus impudicus* having been seen to shoot up three inches in the hour—it does not appear that the underground *matrix* or *nexus*, be it the true plant or merely the root, takes any other than a normally measured period before putting forth its organ of reproduction. It is this principle of analogy, indeed, urges the writer, which is implied in the artificial treatment, of whatever kind, in use with the *champignoniste*. And, in this case, as in vegetable culture in general, the slow process of fertilization by means of seeds or spores is superseded by a method more analogous to that of planting. Experiments of this kind are, it must be allowed, as yet in their nature altogether empirical. It is in their practical success that we find the surest proof that they rest upon a correct principle. It is by means of observation and experiment carried out in the patient and conscientious spirit of the work before us that we may hope to get at some really scientific basis for our study of this most occult form of vegetable life. One fact, meanwhile, worthy of being noted by the way, emerges for our comfort. The few varieties of mushrooms which have been found capable of reproduction under culture have in every instance proved faithful to their type. No case has been known of accidental crossing with the sporules of an alien or noxious species. So that, complain as he may of the inferior flavour of the forced agaric or chantarelle or truffle, compared with that of the free gifts of nature, our gourmet may yet console himself with the thought that, in point of quality at least, there is no death in the pot.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Catalogue of Books lately issued by Mr. QUARITCH of Piccadilly (1866, No. 4) offers a copy of the Life and Times of Reynolds, "published at 2l. 2s., new in cloth, 24s." &c., with certain recommendations affixed, which profess to give the favourable opinions of the Atheneum and the Saturday Review. The latter is as follows:—

"A thorough artist-like account of Reynolds as a painter, accurately defining his place in art, and explaining, so far as words can, that peculiar charm which stamps even his most careless or most faded canvases with the ineffaceable tints of poetry."

These words follow our analysis of the work in question, which we had been compelled to describe as a bad specimen of tasteless and showy bookmaking, adding very little to our knowledge of Reynolds. They were distinctly introduced as the description of what Mr. T. Taylor's book ought to have been and was not: nor, employed as they are, can simple oversight be credibly pleaded for the interpretation given them in the Catalogue. With Mr. Quaritch's estimate of the value of his wares we do not quarrel: but we must protest strongly, in the interests of literature, against a misquotation which practically converts condemnation into entirely unmerited eulogy.

We beg leave to state that it is impossible for us to return rejected communications; and to this rule we can make no exception.

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MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS, St. James's Hall.—
The Director begs to announce that MORNING PERFORMANCES will be given on the following days, viz.:—

This Day, Feb. 24.	Saturday, March 3.	Saturday, March 17.
Saturday, March 3.	Sunday, March 4.	Saturday, March 24.

To commence each Afternoon at Three o'clock. Madame Areabella Goddard, MM. Joschke, Platti, &c., this day, Saturday, Feb. 24. Programme: Quartet in D minor for Strings, Mozart; MM. Joschke, L. Ries, Hann, and Platti; Song, "The Valley," Gounod—Mr. Paley: Sonata in C, Op. 53 (dedicated to Count Waldstein), for Pianoforte alone—Beethoven—Madame Areabella Goddard: Part of "The Barber of Seville," Weber—Mr. Paley: Piano-Forte in D minor, for Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello—Beethoven—Madame Areabella Goddard, MM. Joschke, and Signor Platti. Sofa Stalls, 3s.; Balcony, 3s.; Admission, 1s.—Programmes and Tickets at Chappell & Co.'s, 50 New Bond Street; Austin's, 28 Piccadilly; and at Keith, Prowse, & Co.'s, 48 Cheapside.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS, St. James's Hall.—
On Monday Evening next, Feb. 26, the Programme will include Mendelssohn's Trio in C minor; Mozart's Divertimento in E flat; for Strings; Beethoven's Sonata in F major, Op. 10, for Piano-Forte and Violoncello; Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri"; Subscription to the Series of Eight Concerts, 4 Guineas; Family Tickets, 3s. Guineas each; Single Tickets, 1s.—Tickets are now ready at Lamborn Cock, Addison, & Co.'s, 62 New Bond Street. CAMPBELL CLARKE, Secretary, 34 Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

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STODARE.—Three Hundred and Forty-ninth Representation.—THEATRE OF MYSTERY, Egyptian Hall.—MARVELS IN MAGIC AND VENTRLOQUISM, as performed by command by Col. Stodare, before Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family, at Windsor, Tuesday Evening, November 21, 1865.—The marvellous SPHINX, the Birth of Flower-trees, and Stodare's celebrated Indian Basket, &c., as only performed by him. Every Evening at Eight. Wednesday and Saturday at Three. Adm. 1s. at Moxell's, Old Bond Street, and Box-office, Egyptian Hall. Admission, 1s. and 2s.; Stalls, 3s.

"Almost miraculous."—Vide Times, April 18, 1865.

WILL CLOSE ON SATURDAY, MARCH 17.

SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS.—THE WINTER EXHIBITION OF SKETCHES AND STUDIES BY THE MEMBERS IS NOW OPEN, 5 Pall Mall East, Nine till Dusk.—Admission, 1s. On dark days the Gallery is lighted by Gas. WILLIAM CALLOW, Secretary.

GENERAL EXHIBITION of WATER-COLOUR DRAWINGS, Dudley Gallery, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. The Exhibition is open daily, from Ten till Six. On dark days, and at dusk, the Gallery is lighted by Gas.—Admission, 1s.; Catalogues, 6d.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT EXHIBITION at SOUTH KENSINGTON will be opened to the Public in April 1866. Admission, on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, One Shilling each person. On Tuesdays, 2s. 6d., season Tickets, available also for the Private View, One Guinea each, may be obtained at the South Kensington Museum, and at the Society of Arts, John Street, Ad.-iphi.

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44 West Strand, February 1866.

ROYAL SCHOOL OF MINES, Jermyn Street.—Professor R. WILLIS, M.A., F.R.S., will commence a Course of Thirty-six Lectures on APPLIED MECHANICS on Monday next, the 26th of February, at Twelve o'clock, to be continued on each succeeding Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Monday, at the same hour. Fee for the Course, 2s.

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